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FROM

THE GIFT OF THE

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

VERSES.

BY

EBENEZER SMITH,

AYR.

GLASGOW: DUNN & WRIGHT.

1874.

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Cult of English Poets.

PREFACE.

THE Author, having been dragged into notice in connection with a recent action in the Court of Session, known as the "Pharisee Case," is induced to publish a second volume of Verses, in the hope of improving his acquaintanceship with the public.

To poetic power, or the originality of genius, he makes no pretence; his highest hope being that the reader may find in his Verses some evidence of honest thought, and true feeling, and may in some of the productions discover—in however small a measure—the pith of common sense.

Where weakness in his thoughts, or in the embodiment of them, is apparent, he casts himself upon the kind indulgence of the reader.

AYR, *September*, 1874.

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VERSES.

A Dedication,

AND FRAGMENTS OF AN UNFINISHED ESSAY.

WHEN thoughts of parting press our hearts,
And death's dark shades are closing near,
The wish to be remembered starts
As promptly as the bitter tear—
No friendless wretch, no abject slave,
But shrinks from a forgotten grave!

Within the hand of friendship kind
With which he ofttimes pleasure took,
Who would not leave some pledge behind
On which the mourning eye might look;
Which might recall the friend that's gone
To slumber in the dust, alone?

Alas! we know the dead are dust,
Of worms and quick decay the spoil;
Whatever guardian we may trust,
Our relics mingle with the soil;
Yet on our tombs these words we see—
Our deathbed's cry—"Remember me!"

Strange wish! When comes the solemn hour—
Whatever sophistry may teach—
We feel and own its subtle power:
It opens scenes sight cannot reach;
It widens, broadens hope's domain,
And whispers—"We shall meet again."

Oh! thou who from this stem hast sprung,
And art of me the better part,
Since thou art vigorous and young,
Whilst I am rotting at the heart,
Take this memorial which I give,
And let thy father's memory live!

When I am rooted out and gone,
Nor cumber more this earthly spot,
Some wretch may say, with sneering tone,
Like serpent's hiss—"He loved thee not."
This gift be then my mem'ry's shield,
Here see thy parent's heart revealed.

Love thee, my boy ! if aught of good
The sacrifice to thee might bring,
This worthless trunk, for faggots' food,
Upon the altar I would fling—
    Yes ! witness it, ye Powers above !
    I've wronged, but never ceased to love.

If I have lost the nobler chance
To guide thy steps and mould thy mind
(Heaven only knows how circumstance
Conspired to make me seem unkind),
    May these last thoughts my heart outsends
    For past neglect make some amends.

What wrong I did, my neighbours scanned ;
They noted all its broad extent,
And muttered, with uplifted hand—
" Base wretch, he never will repent."
    They knew not, know not till this day,
    How sorrow ate my heart away.

How did remorse my bosom rend !
When thou wert slumb'ring in thy cot,
God's eye has seen me o'er thee bend,
Though other eye beheld me not,
    And pray—oh, may the pray'r be heard—
    That He thy infant steps would guard.

But I can trust thee, gen'rous boy!
Though others held me cold and rude,
The blast they only saw destroy,
Has breathed on thee in gentler mood;
    Ne'er summer gale with blossomed tree
    More lightly played than I with thee.

If torrent-like my life has flowed,
And ravaged where it should have blessed,
The stream at times its current slowed,
And flow'rs upon its banks caressed;
    Into its depths thou then could'st look,
    And see thyself as in a brook.

Believe, believe me, oh, my child!
The image which thou then did'st see,
Ev'n when the stream ran rough and wild,
Was present still, though hid from thee;
    Beneath the foaming, swirling deep
    Thy place thou in my heart did'st keep.

Enough—but oh, the bare surmise,
That when the grave shall o'er me close
Thou could'st forget me, or despise!
This were to treble all my woes,
    To drape with tenfold doubt and dread
    The chamber dark and narrow bed!

'Tis past! the scaring vision 's gone,
Like some grim phantom of the night,
Which, waking, we discover flown,
With a relief that is delight;
'Tis past, and only love divine
Now shares my trust, dear boy! with thine.

How sweet it is a youth to see
Hang, eager, on his father's lips,
With burning eye, as hangs the bee
Upon the flow'r from which it sips;
Whilst glows the visage of the sire,
From feeling's flow, or passion's fire!

I might have seen—Oh! curse that *might!*
It cracks like an avenging whip—
Why did I suffer vain delight
My life of lasting joy to strip?
Grim Death! amongst thy weapons keen
Is none so sharp as—*might have been!*

I may not have thee by my knee,
I may not lead thee by the hand,
But from the grave I'll talk to thee,
And guide thee to the Better Land—
My life's neglect, dear boy! forgive,
And, dead, I'll teach thee how to live.

When mourning o'er a lifetime lost,
My breast by sharpest anguish torn,
This thought has ever grieved me most—
That thine should be a clouded morn.
    I've wronged my boy—ah! *there* is pain
    Which wakes the wish to live again.

New lease of life I would not take,
Unless to live with thee, my son!
And constant reparation make
For all the ill the past has done;
    That hope could Heav'n in mercy give,
    Then, though in tortures, I would live!

It may not be; the misspent past
Returns not at remorse's call;
Our years, like snow-wreaths melting fast,
Leave but the shroud and funeral pall—
    The mound of mould and turf so green
    Must soon appear where mine have been.

The little that of life remains
Henceforth to thee I dedicate—
Haste! haste, ye tardy halting strains!
Let not repentance be too late!
    The gift I purpose to bequeath
    May yet be snatched away by death.

Like Indian captive at the stake,
By life-long foes encompassed round,
My courage rise, my faith awake,
Whilst thronging mem'ries taunt and wound—
No care for self, no thought of fear,
All, all, for thee my injured dear!

Had I a spark of fire divine,
I'd breathe my soul into the book;
I'd lend a pulse to every line,
Give every thought thy father's look,
And live in this when I am gone,
As ancient lives survive in stone.

May Heav'n with its approving smile
Enrich thy father's last bequest,
As sunset dowers the rocky isle,
That glitters on the ocean's breast,
Attired in clouds of crimson fold,
And crowned with gems and burnished gold!

If rays so soon to sink in night
On barrenness such wealth can show'r,
A beam of pure celestial light
Even this poor gift may richly dow'r—
Eternal Father! hear above!
And guide the pen of filial love.

Fragments.

Look through a disc of coloured glass, and lo !
The Heaven above transferred to Earth below !

Each scene and object in the gazer's view
Wears as its own the tinted medium's hue.
The fair looks fairer in strange robes attired ;
The frightful, veiled, stands forth to be admired ;
Bright spots seem brighter, and the dark have gone ;
The fields and trees wear verdure not their own,
And all combined so fair a world reveal
We needs must sigh to think it is not real.

So life surveyed through childhood's tearless eyes
Puts on the gloom of childhood's paradise.

The flame within, which burns so pure and bright,
On all without pours forth supernal light ;
Far distant objects in reflection show,
And glory lies on the long path below !

Thus Nature, wisely, hides from tender youth,
In golden mists, reality and truth ;
As prudent guardians, from an infant heir,
Conceal the burdens he is doomed to bear,

Till genial years shall manhood's strength impart,
Breadth to his shoulders, courage to his heart.

Oh, gen'rous Nature! which such mercy shows
To young inheritors of future woes,
'T were well could man in this thy wisdom see,
And, training children, strictly copy thee.

The brute creation rise superior here,
Admire thy goodness, and thy law revere;
With looks complacent see their young at play,
And share the bliss which man presumes to stay.

Thou playful kitten, and thou frisking lamb!
No surly sire, no sour, ill-tempered dam
Intrudes on you when over field or hearth
Ye lightly skip in unreflective mirth,
And hourly stretch your growth to due increase
And strengthen lung and limb, and—sleep in peace.

If soulless brutes, who run a brief career,
Endure brief pangs, and quickly disappear,
Must have their term of unrestricted play
Before they toil, or plod life's weary way,—
Shall young immortals be content with less,
Whom four-score years may harass and oppress;
Who on life's threshold must encounter woes
Of sharper tooth than instinct ever knows,

Who are foredoom'd to toil 'neath such a strain
That gods, with pity, shall behold their pain,
And who, relieved at three-score years and ten,
Have only reached the full estate of men?

. . . . . .

Of all the cups my lips have kissed or quaffed,
One only offered an unmingled draught;
No bitter drop into its sweetness shed—
Pure, sparkling, rich as from the fountain head!
When childhood's goblet I with rapture drained,
No ache succeeded, and no dreg remained.

. . . . . .

The bud of hope shall I untimely nip,
Or dash the goblet from the glowing lip?
Shall I breathe frost upon the tender leaf,
Or into nectar drop the gall of grief?
Or strew with thorns the flow'r-besprinkled road
Which thou art walking, hand-in-hand with God?
No, Heav'n forbid! Commit thyself, my son,
To harmless sport and mirth-inspiring fun,
As yonder dove with wide, expanded wings
Its feathered bosom on the sunbeam flings,
And floats, in bliss to creature rarely given,
The proud possessor of both Earth and Heaven.

. . . . . .

Robert,

AGED 21 MONTHS.

Stricken.

Oh, God ! whose glory kindles suns,
  And silvers moons that glance afar,
Ere his last sand expiring runs
  Have pity on my twinkling star !

By Thy great mercy first he shone,
  And should his light extinguished be ;
Though few would miss him were he gone,
  The heavens would lose their charm for me.

Think of the fair but waning moon
  Round which he circles in his turn ;
Let not her beams be quenched too soon,
  And leave his faint ones long to burn.

Let yon dark cloud, descending near,
  Be chased by Thy reviving breath ;
And suffer not the babe so dear
  To languish and be lost in death.

Oh ! Thou who art the Glorious Sun
  That brightens every orb of life !

Help me to say, "Thy will be done,"
  Should'st Thou eclipse both child and wife.

I know it is Thy glory's rise
  That quenches all the lights that shine;
And though the loved and dear one dies,
  I will not murmur or repine.

But, moon and star! oh, if from heav'n
  Thou blottest both by one dark cloud,
Then I to whom their light was given
  Must also make its folds my shroud.

Dying.

Oh, God! my little star to-night
Shines with a fainter, feebler light,
And twinkles with more fitful gleam,
And wanes like a retiring dream.
The pale-faced mother-moon has now
A deeper sorrow on her brow,
And casts more tender looks of love
Whilst leading him to realms above;
And, close as he has ever been,
Has drawn him closer since yest'reen.
The dark cloud, with more threat'ning frown,
Seems to be slowly settling down;

In form a dismal, drooping pall,
As black as o'er the dead can fall.
My heart, oppressed by greater weight,
Is trembling for my darling's fate,
And moans like some far-ebbing sea,
Its loudest, last appeal to Thee.
I still implore, e'en yet I pray
(For death alone puts hope away),
Oh ! save the tender infant dear,
Who has not lived his second year ;
Allay this tempest of alarms,
And spare him to his mother's arms.
Give or withhold my heart's request
As Thou in wisdom thinkest best ;
And, oh ! if I in grief and pain
Must kiss cold infant lips again,
If I must carry forth another,
And lay him by his long-lost brother,
Then take the little soul away
So gently that 'twill seem to stay ;
By easy stages thread the spheres,
Whilst we behold through blinding tears ;
And when at last, revived and blest,
Our lamb is in the fold at rest,
Leave such sweet memories below,
That rising bliss shall conquer woe.

Dead.

Oh! mock me not, unclouded heaven;
  Stars! veil your faces fair;
To death my darling has been given,
  And I am in despair.

My fancy sees him reappear,
  He sparkles far and high—
Alas! 'tis but the glancing tear
  That trembles in my eye.

. . . . . .

As fair a form as ever lay
  Asleep on bed or bier!
His gentle spirit passed away,
  Here lies my last-born dear.

His days—a few quick-running sands—
  Have found a fitting close,
For never yet by sculptor's hands
  Was marbled such repose.

Though thunderbolts which shake the sphere
  Could not the slumb'rer wake,
Affection's foot draws softly near,
  Lest his repose it break.

These Parian cheeks their bloom have shed,
  These veins no current warms,
But ne'er in bower or bridal bed
  Did beauty wear such charms.

Such loveliness was never sung,
  Or lullabied to rest;
Such heavenly sweetness never hung
  On mortal mother's breast.

The spirit into glory passed,
  Unstained by guilt or guile,
On these pale features seems to cast
  The reflex of its smile.

If ever since the world began
  A cherub left the skies
With Mercy's message unto man,
  Then here that cherub lies!

These lips, though motionless, have speech,
  These eyes, though fixed, can plead;
These waxen hands he cannot reach
  Have power to intercede.

I scorned the preacher's idle breath,
  No censor woke my fear;

But, now, the eloquence of death
  I cannot choose but hear.

My soul, which threat'nings never shook,
  Now shakes before a child ;
Thank God! who sends such stern rebuke
  By messenger so mild.

Oh ! ye who still on frailty frown
  With visage harsh and stern,
Behold the angel Heaven sent down !
  And his behaviour learn.

No scowl, no threat, no barbed dart;
  The babe now bless'd above
Has won his faithless father's heart
  By smiles and looks of love.

Great God! who gave such beauty breath,
  And now hast sent such sleep,
Till I rejoin my dear in death
  His counsels let me keep.

Buried.

THE sky is darkly overcast,
And keenly blows the bitter blast,

And I, down-beaten by the gust,
Have shed my blossom in the dust.

O'er shriveling bud and withering leaf
I impotently wail my grief—
Oh, bitter fruit of promise fair!
Yet why complain? yet why despair?

Bright sunbeams mingle with the gloom
That hangs o'er Eden's blighted bloom;
One lasting refuge yet remains,
Though desolation darkly reigns.

Come good or evil, light or shade,
God never fails the soul He made;
Unclouded noon and starless sky
Proclaim His mercy equally.

Through dreary nights of moonless grief
I'll cling to Him with fixed belief;
And thread the deepest shades of death
With warmer love and firmer faith.

Though winter strip my branches bare
I'll trust His tender, ceaseless care;
Till blessings bloom from thorns of pain,
And loss becomes the root of gain.

As sure as light and cloud unite
To raise the rainbow's faultless height,
Our joys and woes, commingling, tend
To one harmonious, perfect end.

The gracious Father of us all,
Who marks the fruitless blossom's fall,
Has heard my child's complaining cry,
And caught his last expiring sigh.

What though the far and final end
I cannot see or comprehend,
Shall dust to the withdrawing sun
Presume to say "What hast thou done?"

I leave my child beneath the sod,
To darkness, to decay, and God!
Mysterious are His ways, but still
I bend, submissive, to His will.

Risen.

But one short month has passed, and lo!
'Neath morning shower and noontide glow,
The withered turf above him laid
Once more puts forth its flower and blade.

Shall God, who thus by gentle dews
And sunbeams bright the grass renews,
Forget the dear one lost in death,
Who drew from Him his vital breath?

No! sense may to despair be brought,
But faith forbids the impious thought;
Our souls had not been taught to wait
Had not the grave an outward gate.

As o'er the darkness, tempest-driven,
Still shines serene the vault of heaven,
Life, light, and joy outlast the tomb,
Though hidden by its passing gloom.

He mocks us not whose law imparts
Their strongest instinct to our hearts,
And bids affection fondly burn
For those whose ashes fill the urn.

All Nature speaks, with accent plain,
The truth that man shall live again;
The snowdrop whispers as it dies,
The day-spring shouts "The dead shall rise."

The simple daisy, swift to bloom
Upon the turf that roofs the tomb,

Refutes the soulless sceptic's lies,
And shames his barren sophistries.

I gently pluck that daisy now,
And bear it home with brightened brow;
Believing that my God has done
The same with my beloved son.

——:o:——

In Memoriam.

Oh man, when at thy best estate,
Thy strength is small, thy frailty great!
The strongest cord that binds thy stakes
Ere gossamers are broken, breaks!
The lightest zephyr's breath that blows
The tent thou pitchest overthrows!

Thou wanest like the summer cloud
Whose fleeting glory forms its shroud;
The tender bud upon the tree
Though doomed to fall, outliveth thee;
The rainbow in the watery sky
Has not thy mutability.

Thou art unstable as the shade
That shifts on April's sunny glade!

As changeful as the flitting rays
That from Aurora's diamonds blaze!
And feebler than the broken beam
That shimmers on the moonlit stream!

The shortest day has morning bright,
High noon, and eve, ere falls its night;
But Death eclipses at its rise
The dawn of life in infant eyes,
And darkness dismal as can low'r
Descends on thee at any hour!

The seed that sprouts on yonder plain
Has blade and ear and ripening grain;
But Death, with sickle cold and keen,
His richest harvests gathers green—
Young stems crowd thick in all *his* sheaves,
And few have sere and yellow leaves!

Alas for him! the loved and dear!
Who made the bed of hope his bier,
Whom Death cut down whilst slowly fell
The early flowers he loved so well—
To his last rest my thoughts repair
And find "Mutation" written there!

Ye midnight winds! that wail your woe
O'er withering snowdrops bending low,

As this low mound ye wander by
Oh ! heave a tenfold deeper sigh !
And ask the stars your grief to share—
To make this turf their nightly care !

Here well may love and friendship kneel
In all the anguish heart can feel !
Ev'n I ! whom change can scarce surprise,
Or sorrow move, with melting eyes
Have wandered hither in the gloom
To pay this tribute at his tomb.

No praise I speak, though o'er his dust
The warmest eulogy were just !
For even in his boyhood green
He scorned the haughty, spurned the mean,
Anticipated Nature's plan,
And acted like a gentle *man !*

I comfort not, but breathe a pray'r
That stricken hearts may not despair ;
And that the dark cloud overhead,
From which the awful bolt has sped,
May ere the close of life's brief day
In showers of blessing pass away.

The Drunkard.

RIPE for ruin! damned by drink!
Bending o'er destruction's brink!
Who that saw the infant tree
Had predicted this of thee?

Rifted trunk, and branches torn!
Leafless, lifeless, and forlorn!
Lurid lightnings low'ring o'er thee,
And eternity before thee!

Drunkard! thine's an awful plight;
Thou art an appalling sight!
Ling'ring lone till prostrate laid,
Wither'd, wasted, drooping, dead!

Oh, that ere thy prime was past
Thou hadst bowed before the blast;
Bowed, and fall'n, and left a name
Linked with honour, not with shame.

Virtue shocked, and wisdom pained,
Feeling torn, and friendship strained;
Few can now lament the storm
Rising to remove thy form.

Love has lost its hope of thee,
Blighted, blasted, broken tree!
And the very wretch will sneer,
As thy ruins disappear.

——:o:——

The Hypocrite.

Of scoundrels wouldst thou find the chief,
Look not for beggar, burglar, thief;
Behold the ranting wretch who stands
With upturned face and lifted hands!
His lips in haste the Lord to laud,
His heart intent on impious fraud.

Behold the basest of the base
In yonder pompous child of grace!
Who, swindling man from day to day,
Has risen in public place to pray;
Resolved—with Tophet full in view—
To circumvent his Maker too.

Robed in religion's garment white—
Put on at morn, put off at night—
All evil deeds this wretch has done
Which men commit beneath the sun,
And on his guilt has grown and thriven,
But—can he steal a march on Heaven?

No! underneath that goodly guise,
In which this daring trick he tries,
The eyes of men, long since, have seen
The heart so black, the mind so mean;
And that concealed can never be
From God, which mortal man can see.

Soon Nature, 'midst portentous gloom,
Shall hear the dastard's dreadful doom;
The robe which he so long has worn
Shall soon from him be rudely torn,
And all the life he thinks concealed,
To his last thought, stand forth revealed.

So long as justice grants delay,
Let us, his fellow sinners, pray
That He, who to the utmost spares,
May pardon this poor sinner's pray'rs;
That Mercy yet her arm may stretch,
And from perdition pluck this wretch!

Whilst shudd'ring at his impious crime—
The vilest known to earth or time—
Let us beware lest swelling hate
Exultingly forecast his fate,
And watch lest our own lives should be
Polluted by hypocrisy.

The Publican.

FROM bustling mart, with broken heart,
  Bowed down, and in despair,
See yonder man, so worn and wan,
  Approach the house of pray'r!

Not side by side with pompous pride
  Does he desire to stand,
But in the shade by pillar made
  Uplifts his trembling hand.

With head inclined, with awe-struck mind,
  Before his God he bends;
His guilt confessed with smitten breast,
  And with a heart that rends.

His pale lips part, and from his heart,
  Which only Heaven can see,
Wells up the cry to God Most High—
  "Be merciful to me."

Through heav'n's far gates, where mercy waits,
  These words have winged their way;
The burdened groan has reached the throne—
  Outspeeding morn's first ray.

Oh, matchless bliss! Oh, happiness!
  The soul which sin had dyed
Is cleansed from stain, renewed again—
  The man is "justified!"

Silent and slow! behold him go,
  The theme of holy mirth!
To angels bright a glad'ning sight!
  A king by "second birth!"

Oh, worth untold! the glitt'ring gold
  Of yonder millionaire
In balance laid were far out-weighed
  By this repentant pray'r!

——:o:——

The Pharisee.

THE incarnation of all evil!
The first-born darling of the devil!
A creature formed to pray and prowl,
Without a heart, with little soul—
What wretch more odious can be
Than yonder smooth-tongued pharisee?

Beneath that face of pious paint,
Whose pray'rful lips proclaim the "saint,"
Lie rows of teeth more cruel far
Than any Bengal tiger's are;
That mouth which o'er the sinner moans,
Can rend his flesh and crush his bones.

Intent on saving sinners weak,
He glides through life, slow, silent, sleek
But ready always, night and day,
To turn and gorge himself with prey;
No more voracious shark than he
In all the earth-encircling sea!

Woe to the victim in his path
Who rouses his remorseless wrath!
No bear, urged on by Nature's law,
Uplifts a more unpitying paw;
No cobra venomed fangs can dart
With less compassion in its heart.

Yet, innocent as slumb'ring child,
With down-dropped eyes—how meek, how mild!
As serpent vile its victim charms,
He draws his prey into his arms,
Insulting God, without a qualm,
With placid pray'r, and sounding psalm.

Ev'n in his moods of wrath or guile
He breaks upon you with a smile,
And hurrying on the hour of doom,
Shines gloriously amidst the gloom,
Like lightning gleam, which darts from Heaven
Before the oak beneath is riven.

He gives—but always in such way
That those who get must more repay;
He helps—but not till he has made
A slave of him who takes his aid;
He works for good, or ill's prevention,
But always with a bad intention.

To raise himself an inch he'd pray
The length of summer's longest day;
To gain some paltry private end
He'd sacrifice his bosom friend,
And break, to gratify his hate,
His father's venerable pate.

The orphan robbed, he says:—"'Tis well!
Let's pray—God keep his soul from hell;
As for myself, my sins forgiven,
I'm going shoulder-high to Heaven;
Where I upon a throne shall sit,
And fresh enormities commit."

Thus mingling robbery and rant,
Deceit and holiness, the "saunt"
Goes, step by step, the downward road
That leads to Satan's dread abode,
And wakes astonished—with a stare—
To find a man so pious THERE.

——:o:——

The Wreck of the "Northfleet."

No breakers white! no tempest's height!
  The stars through skies serene were gliding;
No rock to fear! no danger near!
  Where lay the "Northfleet" proudly riding.

The watch was set, the beacon lit,
  And sleep was gently o'er her falling,
When came that shock, which silence broke—
  The thunderbolt not more appalling.

Then rose the wail above the gale—
  The stoutest heart like aspen shaking—
From dreams of bliss, to death like this—
  Had ever night such dread awaking?

The frenzied crowd, with curses loud,
  Uprose like wolf-pack horror-cluster'd;
And drowned with howls the gallant Knowles,
  Who, calm and brave, his seamen muster'd.

Dread wax'd the strife! despair of life
  Lent cowards strength for self to battle;
Whilst women nude, and children, stood
  Pent-up, like slaughter-waiting cattle.

In vain, with odds too great for gods,
  The Captain, like a giant, wrestled,
To save the life of child and wife,
  Whilst in *his* breast his young wife nestled.

His own life spurned, to *her* he turned—
  "Here, Bo'sen, here's a dear charge—take her"—
A hero's part—O! noble heart!
  She loved, and thou didst *not* forsake her.

To duty true! what man *could* do,
  He did, despite this sad leave-taking;
From *his* lip fell no moan, to tell
  That here a manly heart was breaking.

Boots not to tell what's known too well—
  Such scene befits imagination—

How heel'd the ship—the awful dip!
  Three hundred souls swept from creation.

Fix'd at his post! though all was lost—
  His "hands" aloft, for dear life springing—
The brave man stood, till rose the flood,
  And drowned his voice, so clear and ringing.

That voice shall sound the world around,
  Wherever rolls a heaving billow,
The winds of night, in whispers light,
  Shall waft it o'er the sailor's pillow!

Whilst Sorrow's lip shall name the ship,
  Or tears be shed at such a story,
The hero's name shall glow with fame,
  And "Knowles" be linked with England's glory.

——:o:——

Captain Knowles.

Honour to Captain Knowles,
  His name shall live in story,
With other kindred souls
  Who died for England's glory.

The "Northfleet" rose and fell,
  And calmly he lay dreaming,
When rose that warning knell,
  'Midst wild despair and screaming.

"Aye, aye," he quickly cried,
  And, from repose and beauty,
Sprang to the bulwark's side—
  First at the post of duty!

He knew the danger well,
  None more compassion needed,
Yet strove the strife to quell—
  Himself alone unheeded!

With passions wilder far
  Than seas their fury spending,
Behold the gallant tar
  Like some sea-god contending!

"Back, cowards!" hear him shout,
  On child and woman doting;
"I'll blow his brains about
  Who leaves till these are floating."

He wrung his young wife's hand,
  And kissed her ere they parted;

Then turned to his command—
  Oh! lover lion-hearted!

Could England ask for more?
  A sailor's duty ended,
He looked to sky and shore,
  And with his ship descended.

Honour to Captain Knowles!
  His name shall live in story,
With other kindred souls
  Who died for England's glory.

——:o:——

Elegy

ON THE DEATH OF CAPTAIN KNOWLES.

SLEEP on, brave Tar! at rest in glory's bed!
  The ocean's lap makes thee a fitting pillow;
The tangled sea-weed fitly wraps thy head;
  Fit winding-sheet for thee the heaving billow.

A nation's heart sank with thy sinking ship—
  The good "Northfleet," with her three hundred souls!

But comfort came when Fame, with trumpet-lip,
  To England's death-roll added "Captain Knowles."

That name shall sound the world around
  Wherever rolls a crested billow;
The winds of night, in whispers light,
  Shall waft it to each seaman's pillow.

The tears we shed we may not shed o'er thee,
  Nor lay thy bones in consecrated dust;
But we, henceforth, will consecrate the sea
  Which in its keeping holds such sacred trust.

Whilst surges break upon our rocky shore,
  Or rippling waves encircle golden sands,
No dirge thou'lt need thy mem'ry to deplore—
  No wreath of laurel from the sculptor's hands.

The beacon-light guides sorrow to thy grave;
  Thou hast a scroll in every sail that's bent;
And whilst the cliff the whirlwind's wrath shall brave,
  Thou shalt not want enduring monument.

Reflections

ON THE WRECK OF THE "NORTHFLEET."

FROM sleep! to sleep beneath the deep,
  Whose dreary midnight knows no morning;
In wild despair, without a pray'r—
  How sad the fate, how loud the warning!

Three hundred gone to lands unknown,
  Beyond the distant realm they sought;
Their voyage o'er ere yet the shore
  Was lost to either sight or thought.

Father and child, the mother wild,
  And men in manhood's strength and flow'r;
The new-made wife, the unborn life,
  Together 'whelmed in one brief hour.

In one dread whirl, by one wild swirl,
  Dragged down to ocean's dark abysses!
Tumultuous groans, faint bubbling moans,
  And o'er their grave the cauldron hisses!

Heaven rest their souls! the billow rolls,
  And storms blow loud where they lie sleeping;
But He who spread their lowly bed
  Still has them in His holy keeping.

Let us who ride life's buoyant tide
  With hearts at ease and hopes elated,
Beware lest we, in deeper sea,
  To swifter doom than their's be fated.

——:o:——

ON HEARING A TALE OF CRUEL WRONG.

He who ensnares a maiden shames his mother ;
  On his own sister heaps most foul disgrace ;
Wrongs every man who wears the name of brother,
  And blots the fame of the whole human race.

To lean, to cling, to trust is woman's part,
  'Tis man's to save, to shelter, and defend ;
A devil only, with satanic art,
  Could lead sweet beauty to this tragic end.

We watch the thief, the liar we distrust,
  We shoot the coward when the fight is done ;
What shall we do to this vile slave of lust,
  Who is thief, liar, coward, all in one ?

Hang, drown, shoot, burn or flay the villain ? No !
  Let him live on untouched by rope or knife ;
Let death approach with tardy step and slow,
  To rid Love's Judas of his wretched life.

Let him live on, nor in the very least
  Grudge him his riches or his revels wild;
He'll see a pale-faced ghost at every feast,
  And in his dreams shall hear a wailing child.

——:o:——

At the Sheepfold.

WRITTEN AFTER A SUDDEN CHANGE OF WEATHER IN EARLY SPRING.

LAST night, when the sun o'er the fold was declining,
  I thought it the loveliest picture on earth—
The mothers, meek-eyed, on the green sward reclining,
  The little ones frisking in innocent mirth.

How changed is the scene as the morning dawns dreary!
  The ewe makes its bed amongst cold drifting snow;
The tender lamb bleats, or lies shiv'ring and weary—
  The image of helplessness, weakness, and woe.

Alas! it is thus with our joys and our pleasures;
  We lay ourselves down to dream, happy and blest;
And wake up at morn, robbed and reft of our treasures—
  Our paradise blighted! our bosoms distressed!

Oh! haste thee, sweet Spring! let the sheepfold be gladdened,
And scatter the lambkins the green pastures o'er;
Shine forth, thou bright Sun! till the heart that is saddened
By suff'ring and death is rejoicing once more.

—:o:—

Auld Ayr!

Go north or south, go east or west,
Where'er I set my chair,
I never find a place of rest
Like Ayr—my native Ayr!

By fortune hunted up and down,
I take the nearest lair;
But dwelling in whatever town,
My heart is in Auld Ayr.

I see the sun rise round and bright,
In France or anywhere;
But not the sun that floods with light
The Craigie woods at Ayr.

What other spot has tints of e'en
So deep, so soft, and fair,

As those which cast their golden sheen
  From Arran's hills to Ayr?

Come weal or woe, come life or death,
  I'll ne'er be free from care,
Till I am where I first drew breath—
  In Ayr! my native Ayr!

Should strangers find me stiff and dead,
  And bury me elsewhere,
I'll try to lift my pulseless head,
  And wander back to Ayr!

——:o:——

Epitaph

FOR A PIOUS AND PUSHING CLOTHIER.

SECURE within this prison lies—
  Safe in the keeping of its gaoler—
A man who tried to reach the skies
  By being a successful tailor.

To pawn his broadcloth on a friend
  With him was blessedness outright;

Give him a suit to make or mend,
  You had his blessing ev'ry night.

His piety was but a cloak
  To cover his desire for stitches;
If of your soul's concerns he spoke
  Be sure he wished to make your breeches.

When talking he was all but mute;
  He shook your hand like any brother,
And slipped along as if one foot
  Was half-ashamed to pass the other.

His conscience felt the slightest touch;
  He never knew which way to vote,
But you could always help him much
  By giving orders for a coat.

Abstemious in a high degree,
  He shunned companions gay or loose;
But if you gave him toddy free,
  He always would provide the "goose."

The "congregation's" warmest friend,
  For "custom" he would hug the Pope;
But "fellowship" was at an end
  If "Christian brethren" passed the *shop*.

On one occasion asked to pray
  In public, for a "cause at stake,"
He let his tongue his thoughts betray,
  And prayed for "cabbage" by mistake.

The game was up—no orders given,
  He cursed the moment of his birth;
Thenceforth gave up all hopes of Heaven,
  And slunk into his native earth.

——:o:——

In Memoriam.

MOURN, Ayrshire mourn! whilst o'er thy glades
Descend sere Autumn's dark'ning shades,
With awful frown, o'er Shewalton's towers,
The darkest of all shadows low'rs!
Forth from its breast the bolt has sped,
And Boyle is numbered with the dead!

The deepest sigh, the warmest tear,
May well be heaved and offered here;
For here, at rest, reposes one
The Shire was proud to call her son!
Who sought her welfare, soothed her cares,
From youth, to age and hoary hairs!

The short'ning step—the eye grown dim—
The breathing short—the trembling limb—
These urged the veteran to request
Release from toil, to sigh for rest.
Behold the answer, doubly given!
By man on earth, by God from Heaven!

An age must pass ere men forget
The man in whom such virtues met;
Whose mental power, whose judgment clear,
Whose tact, whose honesty severe,
Exacted tributes of respect
From all, of every creed and sect!

Most fit it was such worth to set
In honour's seat when Ayrshire met;
Such faithfulness found meet reward
In gen'ral reverence and regard;
Such mem'ry finds its proper rest
In his beloved County's breast!

May they be worthy of such chief,
Who mourn his loss with filial grief;
May those he leaves in his estate
Inherit all his virtues great;
And may his mantle—fall'n on Sorn—
Be kept from stain, and nobly worn!

Dunca' Bruce.

DEATH has been busy in auld Ayr,
Has gathered some she ill could spare
  To his dark house,
And with the lave has ta'en awa'
A chiel who's face we often saw,
Whose name, familiar to a',
  Was Dunca' Bruce.

Vain fools may say—"This worthy's name
Should not be handed down to fame,
  He was not douce;
He came of no uncommon stock,
Decorum's rules he often broke,
What could there be to interest folk
  In Dunca' Bruce?"

But others, in a wiser mood,
More humble men—if not so good—
  Will craw less crouse;
Above their townsman's lowly bier
They'll bend with reverential fear,
And drop a sympathetic tear
  O'er Dunca' Bruce.

Although his fortune was not great,
Though living in a lowly state,
  He was of use;
Cold, hungry, heart-sore, and ill-shod,
He hirpled many a weary road,
And lifted many a heavy load—
  Poor Dunca' Bruce!

Through toil and trouble he had passed;
He sought the auld toun's help at last—
  Could she refuse?
A parish coffin he has got,
A pauper's grave—a nameless spot—
Oh! hard indeed has been the lot
  Of Dunca' Bruce.

Ye portering lads! ye rough ram-stams,
Who live between the barrow trams!
  Hear no abuse,
When round the lazy corner spread,
Or lounging in the steamboat shed,
From persons purse-proud or ill-bred,
  Of Dunca' Bruce.

If he had faults, since he is dead
Within the grave let them be laid;
  The man's a goose

Who cannot say—Sound be his rest,
May the green turf by which he's prest
Lie lightly on the mould'ring breast
Of Dunca' Bruce!

——:o:——

Wet-Nursing.

In ancient times, when doctors were less wise,
And learned from Nature—whom they now despise;
Ere fashion reigned, and sense had been undone,
Each Christian mother suckled her own son:
At Nature's dictates laid her babe to rest—
What couch so fitting?—on her own soft breast;
And, moved by instinct and her lambkin's bleat,
Laid to his willing lip the gen'rous teat.

Sight fit for gods! which makes the seraph sing,
And in his flight arrests the angel's wing;
A nation's hope, a people's strength is there,
And both are lost in lost maternal care.

Hushed be thy voice! soft be thy footstep's tread!
Who drawest near the new-made mother's bed;
Behold in love, with wonder-speaking eyes,
The infant man who there unconscious lies,

And her, his guardian! on whose waxen cheek
Glows the deep joy her wan lips cannot speak;
Whose bosom heaves with thoughts thou can'st not know,
As love maternal runs to overflow.

So Eve appeared, whom guilt erewhile had stained,
Her lord restored, her paradise regained;
So 'neath the star by ancient sages seen,
Sweet Mary lay in Bethlehem's humble inn;
So many a true, good, gentle woman since—
The cottar's wife, the consort of the prince!

Woe unto her! to shame for ever lost,
Her sex's scorn, though fashion's reigning toast;
The fickle wretch! false to both God and man,
Who Nature slights for art's convenient plan;
Who with unholy hands dares put in pawn
The fairest picture God has ever drawn;
Who shuts her ear to earth's most touching cries,
And, deaf to duty, far to folly flies;
Who, won by ease, or caught by pleasure's charms,
Commits her infant to a hireling's arms.

"The doctor thinks, and recommends," forsooth!
The blackest lie assumes the garb of truth;
And lie he must, whose Esculapian rod
Divines a breach 'twixt common sense and God;

Who, art and part with an unblushing thief,
Untouched by innocence, unmoved by grief,
Robs helpless babes, life's gateway passing through,
Of that which, loudly, Heav'n proclaims their due.

Behold two lives impaired, from pride or sloth—
For surely God must know what's best for both—
Affection's voice at its out-going smothered,
That fortune's "dear" may be by proxy mothered,
And wealth's weak "darling" sent to flourish, fat,
Upon the milk of misbegot or brat,
Whose plaintive cries are stilled by drug and croon,
Whom "grannie" feeds—or murders—with a spoon.

Shalt thou, Eve's daughter, hear the serpent's hiss?
Here lies thy duty, here thy path to bliss;
In guarding close from danger, want, and death,
The tender babe to whom thy love gives breath;
In pointing youth to virtue's upward road,
And starting manhood on the way to God!

Believe not thou that love which woman spurns
When in the cradle, from the school returns;
Or that the boy in truth belongs to thee,
By hireling suckled, reared on hireling's knee;
Or that affection waits thy bidding still,
A useful slave that comes and goes at will;

Once spurned and banished from thy bosom's core,
It spreads its wings, returning never more.

Dare not the risk of Heaven's most bitter curse;
Bribe no vile quack; enrich no needy nurse;
Thy breasts rebuke thee, Nature is thy guide;
The very brutes decry such impious pride;
Thine is the future; hist'ry hangs on thee;
Thou hast the moulding of Eternity!

——:o:——

On the Death of John Kelso Hunter.

(AUTHOR OF "THE RETROSPECT OF AN ARTIST'S LIFE.")

I MET thee once, and who that did
Can learn without a touch of pain
That one so dear and honoured
Shall never gladden friend again?

Cobbler or artist—matters not—
The eye which o'er thy features ran
Saw, what through life it ne'er forgot,
The picture of an honest man!

Amongst the crowd on death's dark roll
I see the well-known name appear,

And on the page, with awe struck soul,
  Must drop one tributary tear.

Thy birth obscure! thy friendless youth!
  Thy brave, undaunted, honest heart!
Thy loyalty to love and truth!
  Thy deep devotedness to art!

All these I knew, but now they grow
  From the deep background thou hast sought,
With sharper line and warmer glow
  Than when the picture was unwrought.

All that could die of thee is dead,
  And deeply shall the loss be felt;
But "Hunter" shall be known and read
  Whilst lives the genius of the Celt!

——:o:——

Bitter Experience.

A SINNER weak, whom friends forsake,
My wretched bed I here must make,
Without one glimmering of light
To cheer my soul through mis'ry's night.

From pang to pang my limbs I lift,
From thorn to thorn my temples shift;
Still oscillating, sure though slow,
From pain to pain—from woe to woe.

To justice I must not complain—
I know the loud complaint were vain;
To mercy I must not appeal—
Its heart has hardened into steel.

Then with resolve let me await
The morn which brings my welcome fate;
Upon the tardy wheels of day
Comes, slow but certain—Bailie Rae.

——:o:——

Verses

WRITTEN FOR THE ANNIVERSARY OF ROBERT BURNS, 1874.

Go! fetch to me a holly bough
With leaves so green and berries gaudy,
That I to-night may deck the brow
Of Scotia's bard—our Ayrshire Laddie!

So long as stands her ancient "Brig,"
  So long as runs her river hoary,
"Auld Ayr" shall yearly twine a sprig
  In Robert Burns' wreath of glory.

He loved the guid "Toun" better far
  Than fondest son loves kindest mother;
And every bairn that crossed her "Bar"
  Was dear to him as friend or brother!

He sang her manhood's honest worth;
  He sang her lasses fair and bonnie,
Till they were known o'er a' the earth
  As fit to bear the gree wi' ony!

Then fill a bumper! whilst I lay
  On Rabbie's head the crown of holly—
He made us free, he made us gay,
  And now, to-night, he makes us jolly!

May blessings on his mem'ry rest!
  The gift he got he freely spent it—
If Ayr and all the world were blest,
  Though e'er so poor, he was contented!

Christmas.

ONCE more we hail the hallow'd Christmas morn,
The hour of hours in which "the Christ" was born!
When Bethlehem's Shepherds heard the harps of Heaven,
And angels sang, "To you a Son is given!"
When, star-announced, with sun-eclipsing ray,
The "Light of life" brought in the Gospel day!

The "Son of God!" low in a manger laid,
His birth obscure to *Shepherds* heralded;
A humble pair the guardians of his rest,
His only refuge-place a mother's breast;
Oh! well might heavenly hosts, with wond'ring eye,
"Desire to look into" such mystery!

To Heaven's high altar, let us humbly bring
A contrite heart, for Christmas offering;
More acceptable this to our bless'd Lord
Than "gold," or "frankincense," or "myrrh" outpoured;
No jewel fitter for the diadem
Of Christ the King!—the Babe of Bethlehem!

Let wrath, and strife, and angry passion cease,
Hushed in the calm of more than earthly peace;

Let love go forth to all "of woman born,"
Like that which dawned with Bethlehem's brightest morn;
And all sing, "Peace on earth! goodwill to men!"
As hosts of angels sweetly sang it then.

——:o:——

Two Ways of Looking at it.

INTO the house where madmen stay
A paper-hanger chanced to stray,
  And met a strange old man;
Quite condescending—like a duke—
And with a voice which pity shook,
  To talk he thus began:

"I'm very sorry, sir, to see
A venerable man like thee
  Condemned to such disgrace;
I hope sincerely you'll be fit
To mix with other people yet,
  And quit this wretched place."

The old man gave his beard a pull,
And, winking to another fool,
  Most humbly made reply:

"Good sir, 'tis wond'rous kind of you
To venture in amongst a crew
  Of wretches such as I.

"In gratitude let me make bold
(Though I am stupid, weak, and old)
  To give you an advice—
If you have reason, wit, and sense,
Before you fix on going hence,
  Consider of it twice.

"If all your care is for the small—
If sticking paper on a wall,
  Or mixing paste will do—
Then let your sign-board be displayed,
And give yourself to tricks and trade—
  The world's the place for you.

"But, if more sense and wit you've found
Than turns a penny to a pound,
  Your proper course is clear;—
The outer world is not the place
For one who is in such a case,
  Grow daft, and get in here."

The Patriot's Death-Song.

HAUGHTY tyrant, as thou art,
Though compassion proof thy heart,
I'll be free!
What care I for thy worst threat?
Though thy dagger thou dost whet,
I'll be free!

Make thy brow like murky cloud,
Raise thy voice as thunder loud,
I'll be free!
Flash the lightning from thine eye,
Lurid as from midnight sky,
I'll be free!

Bind my limbs with iron chains,
Crush the bones, and burst the veins,
I'll be free!
Make my dungeon deep as hell,
And with icebergs wall the cell,
I'll be free!

Ha! now thou hast done thy worst—
Now thy prison-walls have burst;
I am free!

Death is only an eclipse;
Light is glowing round its lips;
I am free!

Fool! to think that *thou* could'st bind
What is stronger than the wind;
I am free!
Fool! to think that soul or will
Thou could'st either bend or kill;
I am free!

——:o:——

Song.

When all the flowers of Eastern lands
Are culled for bouquets sweet,
And lightly laid, by cold commands,
Beneath a tyrant's feet;
Amongst the fairest of the fair
Who bend unwilling knee,
Is none who can with her compare
Who sweetly blooms for me!

The harps of Heaven, whose silver strings
Repentant sinners hail;

The songster's voice that freely flings
  Its love on evening's gale,
Breathe not a softer, tend'rer strain
  Than that which fills my ear
When, whispered low, o'er bed of pain,
  Her name I nightly hear!

How, in the desert hot and dry,
  Could I my sojourn make
Were not the cooling fountain nigh
  My burning thirst to slake?
Not Horeb's stream to Jacob's child
  Could so refreshing be,
As in life's torrid, trackless wild
  Love's draughts have been to me!

Help me, ye Powers that constant guard
  The bowers of bliss and rest,
Her fond devotion to reward
  Who long my lot has bless'd!
Should I her trusting heart deceive,
  And she neglected pine,
The fires in which apostates grieve
  Were cool compared with mine.

Be near her couch, Great Power Divine!
  All evils thence to charm;

And guard her, whilst bereft of mine,
  With Thy protecting arm;
Then rocks may frown, and tempests rise,
  And clouds come dark'ning still—
If she at anchor safely lies
  The storm may work its will!

——:o:——

Ode

TO TYRANNY.

PURSUE, O Tyranny! thy scheme,
  And boast thee of a base success;
Make strong thy walls, and idly dream
  That weakness wronged has no redress.

Yet, if presumption be a blot,
  Or covetousness basest guilt,
The Fates, whom thou regardest not,
  Will overturn what thou hast built.

No rains descend, no floods appear;
  No whirlwinds on its corners beat;
No thunderbolt bursts, loud and near,
  To shake the fabric on its seat:

There comes no blast from Neptune's horn
  No lusty, roaring winter tide,
To make the pile a people's scorn,
  And level low its towering pride.

But what though ocean keep its bed,
  Or winds of Heav'n forget to rise!
Eternal Honour is not dead,
  Nor Justice slumb'ring in the skies!

The cloud-wing'd storm is swift to smite,
  The ocean's wrathful wave is strong;
But powers of more resistless might
  To heart-wrung pray'rs and tears belong.

Unheard, unseen, these pray'rs and tears
  May gently fall like flakes of snow,
But, gath'ring strength with rolling years,
  Their avalanche lays mountains low.

The widow's heart, the orphan's eye,
  To Heav'n for vengeance mutely call,
And though its top were in the sky,
  O Tyranny! thy tower shall fall.

Hymn.

ETERNAL Sun! when thou dost shine
Life, light, and blessedness are mine;
My strength endures, my graces glow,
And paradise lies spread below.

I am the rainbow in the cloud,
Which arches Heav'n, so high and proud;
And all I am or hope to be,
Depends, Eternal Sun! on thee.

That smile withdrawn in which I shone,
Lo! form and beauty both are gone;
The black, bleak cloud alone remains,
And darkness deep devours the plains.

Arise! Eternal Sun, arise!
And brighten life's tempestuous skies;
Grief's darkest depth were richest mine,
If only thou on me wouldst shine.

Our Sorrows.

When little troubles vex us
  We fret beneath the pain;
When trifling cares perplex us
  We murmur and complain;
But when great griefs assail us
  We lift our eyes for aid
To Him who cannot fail us,
  And suffer undismayed.

When o'er life's sea careering
  Our first head-wind we meet,
We place our trust in steering—
  In shifting helm and sheet:
Then, all expedients failing,
  Our grief and anger rise,
And kept from forward sailing,
  We rail against the skies.

But when the blasts prevailing,
  O'erwhelm our foundering bark,
And wrathful waves assailing,
  Break o'er us in the dark;

When by their might increasing
  We tow'rds the rocks are driven,
From idle efforts ceasing
  We look for help to Heaven!

Then 'midst the storms loud raging
  We feel unwonted calm—
Though dreadful death presaging,
  We drift without a qualm:
From black and deep disaster
  There springs a light unknown,
And every fear we master
  With courage *not our own.*

The wise from sore afflictions
  Extract their greatest bliss—
With thankful benedictions
  The rod they humbly kiss:
As when the night is drearest
  Out shines the distant star,
So sorrow when severest
  Reveals the Heaven afar!

My soul! shall God send blessing,
  And shall He not send ill?
You loved Him when caressing,
  When chast'ning love Him still.

From night's dark clouds of sorrow
Shall gentlest dews descend,
And sunbeams bright to-morrow
Shall with their shadows blend.

——:o:——

Devotion.

BREATHE thou thy secret fervent pray'r to Heaven!
Nor ever doubt that such a prayer hath pow'r;
The earnest cry is half the answer giv'n—
Leave thou the rest to God, and take thy dow'r!

With pious wishes for thy neighbour's good
Fill thou thy heart! whatever others store;
They will enrich thy life, be thy soul's food—
Take this as earnest that they may do more!

No pray'r, no God! beware of such a creed!
Nor wrap thyself in brutal lust or sloth—
The soul is dead that does not know its need,
And by its cry confess its faith in both!

Magnanimity.

O'ER pedigrees, let fools, pretentious, pore,
  And find in heraldry fictitious charms—
One lofty thought ennobles life far more
  Than long descents, or fifty coats of arms!

•

Nobility descends not with a name:
  Nor lies true greatness in a herald's care—
'Tis courage only that is dear to fame;
  And only goodness honour's wreath shall wear!

Let mis'ry range all climes beneath the skies,
  Seeking a home where it may dwell at ease;
Thou in a quiet heart find Paradise—
  Content can calm life's most tempestuous seas.

Whatever treasures thou dost save, or store,
  Be affluent still in simple faith and pray'r;
Not gold or rubies can enrich thee more—
  All wealth without them is but growth of care.

Forbidden pleasures let the worldling know—
  To shun their glitter make it thy delight;
Although like gems they in the darkness glow,
  They will be dust when dawns the morning light.

To beds of down let sluggards fly for rest—
A conscience clear make it thy care to keep;
On Jacob's pillow then thou mayst be blest,
And dreams, like Jacob's, will attend thy sleep.

To take these counsels Heaven grant thee grace!
So shalt thou cheerful through life's changes go;
Anticipating here that Better Place,
Where only bliss unmingl'd thou canst know.

——:o:——

Wasted Lives.

They err, who hopelessly condole,
And speak of lives as wasted,
Because they never reach the goal
To which their vigour hasted—
No golden harvests of success
Have ever yet been grown,
Till failure stooped the soil to dress
In which their seeds were sown.

The hero, first in battle's roar,
May in a trench be lying,
Long ere the standard which he bore
Above the breach is flying;

He may not mingle with the band
  Whose shoutings rend the air,
Yet, none the less, it is his hand
  Which plants the standard there.

They greatly err who prate of sin,
  And urge extreme contrition,
Because a human soul is in
  A desolate condition;
Extent of misery and shame,
  Of guilt is not the standard—
The sheep that's neither torn nor lame
  May have most widely wandered.

The Prodigal, when at his worst,
  To be a swineherd driven—
Although by others held accurst—
  Was at the gate of Heaven;
The haughty Haaman, at his best—
  Ambition's summit nearing,
His princely monarch's favoured guest—
  Was hell-ward fast careering.

The truly good, the wise and great,
  Know well life's thousand dangers,
And, in their loftiest estate,
  To pride are utter strangers;

They are the last, of woman born,
To magnify their labours,
And never view with sneers or scorn
The failures of their neighbours.

——:o:——

Desolate.

A HEART, erewhile the home of love,
Resigned to bitter scorn and hate,
Is like the cottage in the grove
Untenanted and desolate!
Where rankness chokes the rose's birth,
And creeping things possess the hearth.

In silence and desertion all,
Through Winter's cold and Summer's heat,
There stands the slowly crumbling wall,
A ruin, utter and complete!
No roof shall cover this domain!
No fire shall light this hearth again!

Bacchus Worship.

A HEATHEN (this happ'd not abroad)
To Bacchus' shrine drew near,
And asked—"What must I give, great god!
Ere thou my pray'r wilt hear?"

"Thy wealth" (this in a pleasant tone).
He threw his money-bags,
And left the presence of the throne,
Quite happy in his rags!

A second time that devotee
Approached the purple shrine,
And asked—"What must I give to thee
For peace? great god of wine!"

"Thy strength" (the voice was harsher now).
He gave up all he had,
And, shaking like an aspen bough,
Retired, but still quite glad!

He came a third time, to enquire—
"What must I give, great god!
To quench this ever-burning fire,
And ease me of this load?"

"Thy child"—cried Bacchus furiously,
His brow with anger black—

The wretched father went away,
  And brought it on his back!

Once more he came, but now the ghoul
  Looked on with blasting frown,
When on his knees the wretched soul
  Before his throne went down.

"What wilt *thou* give (his looks were wild),
  Have I not got thy pelf?
Have I not got thy strength, thy child?
  Come! give me now thyself."

"Ungracious god!"—the wretch began,
  But ere he closed his speech,
Had crept—although 'twas span by span—
  Within the monster's reach!

He died! and thus will thousands die
  In these benighted lands,
Whilst, on its pedestal so high,
  The throne of Bacchus stands.

Our wealth, our strength, our children—these!
  All these, will not suffice
The wrath of Bacchus to appease—
  He'll frown till *Britain* dies

Song.

THE FAIRY WELL.

BESIDE the fairy well I wait,
  A fairy face to see;
And listen to the tinklings sweet
  Its waters make for me,
    O'er the pebbles, falling, falling,
      This is what they say,
    On my darling calling, calling,
      "Bonnie Gracie Gray!"

My breast is like the fountain deep
  She dips her pitcher in;
Could she to the far bottom peep,
  What is there to be seen?
    O'er the pebbles, falling, falling,
      Hark! the waters say,
    On my darling calling, calling,
      "Only Gracie Gray!"

My heart is like the mirror clear
  Her falling shade will break,

Hope's golden waves outcircling here,
Whose form does each one take?
O'er the pebbles falling, falling
Hark! the fountain says,
On my darling calling, calling,
"Bonnie Gracie Gray's!"

My love is like these constant rills
Which mourn to run so slow;
The oftener she her pitcher fills,
The faster it will flow.
Were my life-stream falling, falling,
Its last drop would say,
On my darling calling, calling,
"Bonnie Gracie Gray!"

The well may sink, the fountain dry,
The mirror dimmed may be;
The channel of love's rill may lie
Unfilled that gushed for thee;
But, from Heaven falling, falling,
Every thought will stray,
On my darling calling, calling,
"Bonnie Gracie Gray!"

The Pauper's Funeral.

No friend to mourn! no bell to toll!
  No parish priest to pray!
And yet, it was a human soul
  That warmed this lifeless clay.

Shall no one weep? no sound of woe
  Proclaim that death is here?
Unblessed, unfriended, must he go
  Who lies on that low bier?

No, Nature calls, with sov'reign power,
  Her ministers around;
And in his last, and darkest hour,
  The poor man help has found.

The wind is moaning piteously,
  The drizzling show'r descends;
And, shedding tears, each plant and tree
  In lowly rev'rence bends.

No bell is tolled, but woods around—
  So leafless now and sere—
Send forth a low, deep, wailing sound,
  Which strikes the thoughtful ear.

No pray'r is said, but perched close by,
  Beside the cold remains,
The redbreast lifts its voice on high
  In sweet and mournful strains.

And so, from Misery's drear abode,
  The dead is slowly driven;
God grant him rest beneath the sod,
  And take his soul to Heaven.

——:o:——

The Duke and the Pauper.

AN INCIDENT WITNESSED BY THE WRITER IN THE DORMITORY OF A LUNATIC ASYLUM.

LAST night, beside a pauper's bed,
  I saw a duke attend;
And as the dark hours slowly sped,
  He watched him like a friend.

Upon the poor man he was seen
  To gaze with anxious look,
As tenderly as he had been
  A lord, or brother duke.

With noiseless foot the floor he paced,
  And then sat down again

Upon the seat his presence graced,
  Beside the bed of pain.

He sat, apart from fashion's crowd,
  Till daylight set him free—
Oh! in a world so cold and proud,
  It was a sight to see.

"All honour to such lowliness!"
  I hear you say, my friend;
"On one so friendly to distress
  May every good attend."

You're proud of him, I well believe,
  But—pardon your deceiver,
Who tells you, laughing in his sleeve—
  "This 'duke' was a 'retriever.'"

——:o:——

Written in a Cemetery.

HARD by these monuments of pride,
  Whose cost had kept them living,
Here lie the paupers, side by side,
  Who starved on our almsgiving!

Thin was their blood, lean were their forms,
  But now 'tis little matter;

There is the less to feed the worms,
  Or make the sub-soil fatter.

They died upon a hardish bed,
  But, 'neath the weeping willow,
They and the fools who grudged them bread
  Must share one common pillow.

Wealth in the world 'twixt rich and poor
  May make some slight division,
But in the grave pride is secure
  Of nothing but derision.

There one low, level couch is spread
  For sons of different mothers;
One rooftree covers every head,
  And all beneath are—brothers.

——:o:——

Song.

I HAD a flow'r, a modest flow'r,
  Which bloomed for me alone,
'Twas full and rich at noontide hour,
  Ere ev'ning it was gone.

I had a gem—no gem so pure
  In casket ever lay,
At night my treasure was secure,
  Ere day-break stol'n away.

I had a bird, a happy bird,
  Whose songs made seraphs sigh;
One day its strains my soul had stirred,
  The next, 'twas in the sky.

Oh ruthless hand! which thus could tear
  My sweet rose from its stem;
Oh cruel death! so quick to bear
  Away my priceless gem.

Oh envious gods! to catch away
  My bosom's joy and pride;
Had I such rapid wings as they
  I soon were by her side!

——:o:——

Parted.

I EVER thought her kind and true,
  And pure and gentle-hearted,
But half her worth I never knew
  Until our lives were parted.

Now nought on earth can yield me mirth,
  But thought of home returning,
I sigh and pray—"God speed the day"—
  My heart still hotter burning.

The hills around one's youthful home
  As they recede look grander,
We love them more the more we roam—
  The further that we wander;
So from my love as I remove
  My wishes still grow warmer,
I sigh and pray—"God speed the day
  That brings me to my charmer."

Ye powers that guide my fortunes here,
  And every blessing send me,
From loss of worldly goods and gear
  And every loss defend me;
But leave me still, through good and ill,
  My darling to caress me,
Or grief and woe alone can flow
  From all that's sent to bless me.

Livingstone Discovered.

WHERE Afric's sun, with scorching ray,
  Glares down on forest, swamp, and flood,
From home and kindred far away,
  A weary, way-worn wanderer stood.

His beard was grey, his form was bent,
  His swart brow closely lined by care;
And from his aching heart out went
  The bitter longings of despair.

With haggard look and dreamy eye,
  He stood amidst a dusky band;
But, far o'er Afric's mountains high,
  His soul was in his native land.

With love, which time could not make less,
  For *her* his heart had early burned;
And in the hour of deep distress,
  To *her* his glist'ning eye was turned.

Nought thinks he now of toils and pains
  Endured since first he learned to roam;
This thought his cheek with sorrow stains—
  "Have they forgotten me at home?"

"Have they forgotten *me*, who ne'er
Forgot the slave my travel tried?
Oh! must I doubt their love and care?"
And then he hid his face, and sighed.

He sighed, as sighs the yearning child;
Or brother, from his brothers torn;
Or longing lover, far exiled;
Or patriot, banished and forlorn.

Far went that sigh, o'er waste and wave,
But yet there was no answer given;
It seemed as if the pale-faced brave
Had cried in vain to Home and Heaven.

Let country, home, and friends forget,
God's loving kindness never ends;
He hears alway, and never yet
Despised the pray'r that suff'ring sends.

He heard *that* pray'r—He touched the heart
Of one who now is Britain's son;
To fair Columbia lost in part
By such a deed, so nobly done.

Nor Bennett's heart He touched alone,
But Stanley's!—good old English name—

Who, worthy of such trust, has shown
His right to share such deathless fame.

Oh! gen'rous mind! and open hand!
That bridged the gulf of space and time;
Oh! dauntless heart! that could command
Success, defying race and clime.

The wand'rer starts! "Help has been sent!"
"From whence? by whom has it been given?"
(So Moses heard, within *his* tent,
Of promised manna rained from heaven.)

He listens! joyful echoes tell
The blessed news that friends are near—
No sweeter music ever fell,
Since time began, on human ear!

Not Britain's flag at last appears,
When forth the traveller slowly creeps;
But *'tis* a brother's voice he hears—
A brother's neck on which he weeps.

Through England let the tidings run!
(What though by strangers 'twas achieved,)
If aught can make two nations one,
'Tis surely—"*Livingstone relieved!*"

Three cheers for our two cousins brave!
All honour to the "Stripes and Stars!"
May such a banner never wave
Again in fratricidal wars.

Whilst hist'ry runs, when 'tis unfurled,
May't henceforth have behind its back,
Or side by side, against the world,
Its mother-flag—the "Union Jack!"

——:o:——

Daffodils.

When wint'ry days low'red dark and drear,
And storms were loud, and frosts severe,
And 'neath the snow-wreath, chilly spread,
All Nature lay decayed and dead,
Desire fell faint, and hope seemed vain,
That daffodils would bloom again.

But lo! the cheerful voice of Spring
Has waked the birds once more to sing;
With gen'rous heat the length'ning days
Pour down their fructifying rays,
And, graceful, upon bank and plain,
The daffodils have bloomed again.

Let others wander o'er the earth
In vain pursuit of wealth or mirth:
I envy not the fickle race—
Their change of scene and change of place—
Since I to blessedness attain
Where daffodils have bloomed again.

Let fools with fond and ardent lip
From pleasure's poisoned goblets sip:
I thirst not for their draughts of joy,
Which in the end are sure to cloy,
Whilst I these golden cups may drain
Where daffodils have bloomed again.

Ye sons of misery! rise and go
Where sunlight falls and streamlets flow,
Where echoes babble songs of love,
And music charms the budding grove—
Go! and forget your grief and pain
Where daffodils have bloomed again.

Though summer from thy life has gone,
And left a prospect cold and lone,
Though loves and friendships all have fled,
And, chilled and frozen, hope is dead,
Your faith and fortitude retain—
The daffodils have bloomed again.

As Winter with its dread array
Retreats when Spring resumes its sway,
So shall distress, despair, and death
Be chased by Heaven's reviving breath:
God and the future yet remain!
The daffodils have bloomed again!

——:o:——

Withering Snowdrops.

FAIR firstlings of the floral year
  Can pity not prolong your stay?
Must this green bank become your bier
  Who reached your bloom but yesterday?

Could beauty move Death's callous heart,
  Or innocence his hand arrest,
Then never had his deadly dart
  Been planted in the snowdrop's breast.

Alas! the pattering rains descend,
  The chilling gusts remorseless blow,
Whilst meek, unmurmuring, ye bend
  And wither on the turf below.

Behold the fitting emblems here
  Of tender, infant human flow'rs!

Who from the bosom to the bier
  Are borne by brief and bitter hours.

Let these frail flow'rs foretell the fate
  Of youthful hope, and ripe desire;
Which rise within our breasts elate,
  Then droop, and wither, and expire!

They teach us not to fix our trust
  In time and earthly things alone;
"Your forms," they say, "will soon be dust,
  And soon be laid where ours have gone."

This lesson let us humbly learn,
  And much as we enjoyed their bloom,
More lasting good we all may earn
  As snowdrops seek their early tomb.

For who that hopes in future years
  To see them from the sod arise,
Can coldly think *man* disappears,
  And 'neath the sod unquickened lies?

Ye sceptics cold! these flow'rets wan
  Rebuke you, and refute your lie,
And gently whisper unto man—
  "We live again, though now we die."

Heart Longings.

He only knows the charms of home
  To whom these charms are lost :
The trav'ller who must farthest roam
  Loves friends and kindred most.
Affection from a faithful heart
  With growing volume flows,
Through banks which ever wider part
  The farther that it goes.

When from a strange and foreign land
  The eye looks through a tear,
How captivating and how grand
  Our native hills appear !
There is a power in mem'ry's glass
  Which makes their ridges rise,
Till mountains strange they far surpass
  Whose tops are in the skies.

How cold and poor a palace seems,
  Compared with one loved spot,
The palace of the wand'rer's dreams—
  His father's humble cot !
As distance makes the star to shine,
  And drapes the heavens with blue,

It gives that cot a look divine,
  Its sky a glowing hue.

No light which shines above the earth
  Can cheer the wand'rer's night,
Like that which on his distant hearth
  Is burning, pure and bright;
As fires on some far beacon tow'r
  Midst deep'ning darkness glow,
Its rays, when clouds of sorrow low'r,
  A clearer radiance throw.

God bless, and prosper thee, my friend!
  Esteemed when thou wert near;
Now, gone to earth's remotest end,
  I hold thee doubly dear.
So monarchs prize a peerless gem
  Procured at priceless cost,
When from the circling diadem
  The treasure has been lost.

May all the saints who watch below,
  And angels pure above,
The richest blessings still bestow
  On thee—my absent love!
With growing force shall turn to thee
  This anxious trembling heart,

The longer that we sundered be—
  The farther that we part.

One earnest pray'r, my heart upsends!
  God! comfort, I implore!
All those who country, home, and friends,
  Have left for evermore:
Soon may their bitter parting end—
  On earth asunder riven,
May they, and home, and love, and friend,
  Unite again in Heaven!

——:o:——

Heroism.

'Tis on the battle-field of life,
As in wild war's less glorious strife,
Brave deeds are done by fame unmentioned,
Whilst cowardice is starred and pensioned.

The mean fight only for reward,
Which nobler natures disregard;
A martyr's cross! a patriot's fetters!
Are not for fools, but for their betters.

"The truth shall live! the sham shall die!"
This is the great man's battle-cry;

The wretch, as to the front he presses,
Has faith in nothing but successes.

When fast the fight against him turns,
His foe the hero proudly spurns;
The hireling—false from strife's beginning—
Seeks glory on the side that's winning.

The wretch, upon the field red-stained,
Boasts of the laurels he has gained;
The vanquished hero quits it crying—
"The truth shall live! the sham is dying!"

"Glory" may spring from rank or birth;
True greatness roots not in the earth;
In time the first its bloom shall see,
The latter, in Eternity.

——:o:——

Sensationalism.

WHY leaves the crowd the house of prayer
With looks of disappointment cold?
Was God, who has been always there,
Not in the temple as of old?

Yes, God Almighty waited there,
  Though by the eye of sense unseen,
Prepared the penitential prayer
  To hear, as He has ever been.

Nor priest nor offering he required,
  Forgiveness ready to impart,
To all who His best boon desired
  With broken and with contrite heart.

From pew to pew, with trumpet-tongue,
  Did Moses and the Prophets move;
And Israel's Bard, like seraph, sung
  The wonders of eternal love.

. . . . . .

And did the worshippers not pray?
  Oh, yes! they did, with faces long,
And raised a Yankee ditty gay,
  And shook the holy place with song.

Then why are all dejected thus,
  And cross and angry-looking some?
"Oh, sir, 'twas such a squeeze and fuss,
  And Mr Singer DID NOT COME!"

Precisely! now I understand!
  These feel as old play-goers do,
Who, tempted out by something grand,
  Have supped on cold, stale tragic stew!

Poor people, I deplore their case;
  Small wonder though their spleen should burst!
Stale entertainment suits NO place,
  And pious platitudes are WORST!

• • • • • •

No sin by Heaven is more abhorred
  (By none are holy hearts more pained),
Than rash approaches to the Lord,
  To be amused or entertained.

The heart that feels its need of God,
  And looks above and lists within,
Soon finds the guide that points the road
  That leads to holiness from sin.

No need of guides, who tell for hire
  Who formed the lanes, and how, and when;
Their tales the weary traveller tire
  More than the travel—ten times ten.

On wanton wing (bright skies above),
  The homeward way may be forgot;
But nature guides the stricken dove,
  Straight as an arrow, to its cot.

Be every soul a stricken dove,
  And all we need our God shall grant;
We KNOW where lies His heart of love;
  It is the pain, the pang we want.

He wounds the whole affrighted flock,
  Whose ball or bolt strikes down but one;
And when a sufferer seeks the Rock,
  He rarely seeks its shelves alone.

'Tis danger prompts the cry of fear,
  And warning note, in bird or beast;
These are but false alarms we hear,
  Upraised by easy-minded priest.

—:o:—

To a Tyrant.

STOOP to kiss a tyrant's toe!
  That I would not do to Cæsar;
How much greater were my woe
  Did I kneel to one like thee, sir!

This is not the deepest pit;
  This is not the darkest cell;
Could I unto thee submit
  I would be much nearer hell.

Bear thy tread! my bones would shiver;
  Bend to thee! my heart would break,
And my soul be torn, but never
  Such a course my mind can take.

No! I scorn thee, and, still scorning,
  Through the night shall bear my woe;
Death or help will come with morning,
  And with either I shall go.

——:o:——

Under Sentence.

UNNUMBERED outcast souls have turned
  On beds of woe and pain
Since first remorse's anguish burned
  Within the breast of Cain;
But never, surely, was there wretch
  So shut from hope as I—
Condemned through night's long dreary stretch
  Uncomforted to lie.

Ev'n Cain himself, whose blighted life
  Has struck the world with awe,
Had one sweet solace in the wife,
  Who made his love her law;
But I, divorced from wife and child,
  And all that makes life dear,
Am doomed to wander through a wild
  A hundred-fold more drear.

May He who, with mysterious mark,
  The murd'rer's brow did brand,
To these dread howls behind me hark,
  And stay the avenger's hand—
Despairing of my kindred dust,
  I on my Maker call;
A fellow-worm afraid to trust,
  I trust the Lord of all!

Man's heart grows callous as the clod,
  And cruel as the grave;
But mis'ry ever finds its God
  Prepared to soothe and save.
Though love on earth may cease to glow,
  It tints the blackest sky;
And mercy softens every blow
  That's dealt by God Most High!

To a Sleeping Child.

THOU buoyant skiff! who o'er life's placid sea
From morn to eve hast danced so joyously;
How soft the beach, how calm the shelt'ring bay,
Where thou, fast moored, dost sleep the night away.

No breaker white, no berg's appalling shade,
Nor blast, nor billow thy retreat invade;
The zephyr's breath, the heaving star-lit deep,
But rock thee gently to profounder sleep.

By no sharp mem'ries is thy bosom torn,
The past returns, but not to make thee mourn;
Before thy vision how the future gleams,
A dawn eternal, draped with rosy dreams!

How sad to think that I was once like thee,
Who, tossed by day on life's tempestuous sea,
Now spend the night in dread alarm and pain,
And drag the anchor which I cast in vain!

I covet not (for oh! how soon it fleets)
The joyous vision childhood waking meets;
But, would to God that I this night were blest
With childhood's innocence and childhood's rest.

Man.

Born in a world of chance, and change,
  Where nothing lasts for aye;
Man has his hours of tenderness,
  Of strength and of decay:
He springeth like the quickened seed;
  He towereth like the tree;
He bendeth, and he falleth,
  And is drifted to the sea.

How lovely in his infant years,
  When nestling in the breast;
Or, in the gently rocking crib,
  Laid quietly at rest!
A tiny, tender, little plant,
  He seeks a mother's care;
Lest some wild gust, or passing foot,
  Should crush his blossoms fair.

How beautiful in boyhood's years,
  When o'er his sunny face,
Alternately, bright smiles and tears
  Each other quickly chase!
A sapling in the waving wood,
  Which bends to every blast,

But stands erect, in graceful form,
  The moment it has passed.

How happy when on life's great stage
  He learns to play his part,
And to the feathered shaft of love
  Lays bare his beating heart!
A graceful tree, whose whisp'ring leaves
  Make music in the glade,
Inviting youthful lovers
  To its shelter, or its shade.

How noble when in manhood's prime
  He rears his burly form,
And spreads his leaf-clad boughs abroad,
  Defying every storm!
A giant oak, which raging winds
  Can neither bend nor break;
Which strikes its roots the deeper,
  The more its branches shake.

How rev'rend when in hoary age
  He stoops beneath his woe,
And sighs, and groans, whilst death's dark stream
  Is murmuring below!
A mould'ring trunk, whose well-known form
  For years outlives decay,

Till, levelled by the midnight storm,
It drops, and drifts away.

The tree which falls into the flood
Is borne away to sea;
Death carries man—a longer drift—
Into Eternity:
The one, we know, can never rise
Anew to deck the plain;
The other, far beyond the skies,
Shall flourish green again.

——:o:——

Reflections

IN A LUNATIC ASYLUM.

DAFT folks, I find, are, like the wise,
Quite quick to give advice, or make it;
But let advice come from the skies,
They equally are slow to take it.
The one whose brain is farthest gone
Too often thinks *his* mind the soundest,
As shallow dubs are sometimes known
To wear a look of depth profoundest.

'Tis here, as in the world without,
  Each one his neighbour's danger sees;
And sends to him the warning shout,
  Yet hell-wards drifts, by quick degrees.
The nearer each to ruin draws,
  The safer he himself believes;
When closest to its iron jaws
  The bait most readily deceives.

Oh! for humility! that gift
  Which makes the angels fit for Heaven!
The lack of which made devils drift
  Till they from God and bliss were driven.
If pride could change the cherub so,
  What can it do for little men,
But sink them in a deeper woe,
  And shut them in a darker den?

Oh! for some "gravitation" law
  Which would to worth and wit apply!
That greater minds would ever draw
  To them the minds of lesser fry!
If fools, both here and otherwhere,
  Would cease to prate, and learn to listen,
Then sorrow's cheek less pain would wear,
  And joy's with brighter smiles would glisten.

Gold.

"Gold! gold! gold!"
  Struggle, and crush, and cry;
Dreamers of dreams! ye seem to think
  There is nothing gold cannot buy.

"Gold! gold! gold!"
  Shout till your lungs are riven,
Ye seem to think that with such a key
  Ye could open the kingdom of Heaven.

"Gold! gold! gold!"
  Trample each other to death
Ye seem to think that if ye were rich
  Ye could traffic in life and breath.

"Gold! gold! gold!"
  This is your only care;
Never a look to the God above—
  Never a thought of pray'r.

"Gold! gold! gold!"
  On the very brink of life—
Your eye grown dim, your locks turned grey—
  Will ye wage this accursed strife?

"Gold! gold! gold!"
Oh tell me, ye fools, I pray,
Though ye had as much as heart could wish
Would it buy you a single day?

"Gold! gold! gold!"
Had you more than the hand could spend
Would it bring you rest, or make you blest:
Would it purchase one trusty friend?

"Gold! gold! gold!"
For this will ye part with peace,
Honour, and truth, and the friends of youth,
And the pleasures that never cease?

"Gold! gold! gold!"
Barter, and buy, and sell—
Ye'll find, at the last, ye have lost the past,
And have given your souls to hell.

——:o:——

John Bull's Sickness.

An old man, called John Bull, fell sick,
And no one knew what ailed him;
His appetite was strong and quick,
But all his members failed him.

His jolly face was pimpled o'er,
  His nose like cabbage reddened;
He boasted of a paunch no more,
  And grew morose and deaden'd.

Like living skeleton he seemed
  Whose form was once so burly;
And he who once with laughter screamed
  Grew fractious, sour, and surly.

His trade fell off, he thrashed his wife,
  His children starved and shivered
And all was lost, except his life,
  Which in the balance quivered.

"What ails John Bull?" the doctors cried,
  "His spirits have been sinking;
With 'tissue' he must be supplied—
  I wonder what he's drinking!"

One recommended "bitter beer,"
  Another "gin or whisky,"
But though he took them both, 'twas clear
  John was not getting frisky.

To "Gladstone's wine" he now applied,
  And now to "London porter,"

But whatsoever cure he tried,
  His hours seemed getting shorter.

An old wife, passing by one day,
  Said, "Try good caller water"—
He tried the simple recipe,
  And very soon grew fatter.

It was not long till he was sound,
  For work or play quite able,
And, with his smiling fam'ly 'round,
  Sat at a groaning table.

He laughed—"ha, ha—another slice!"
  These doctors are a swindle;
Henceforth for them, and their advice,
  I will not care a spindle.

Their talk of "tissue," grave and wise!
  What is it all but clatter?
A tissue of the vilest lies—
  The cure for me is water!

My Darling, do not Die.

And thou art ill! and I may not
  Above thy pillow bend,
Nor in the time of trial hot
  A word of comfort lend—
Then Heav'n be near, with grace to hear
  This bosom's stifled sigh;
My coming wait, at Glory's gate,
  My Darling, do not die!

The wretch who writhes 'neath wrath of Heav'n,
  And dies in dark despair,
Has less desire to be forgiven
  Than I thy griefs to share.
Could I but give one hour to live,
  One tear of anguish dry—
My coming wait, at Glory's gate,
  My Darling, do not die!

The breast that beats on prison-wires,
  With all the heavens in view,
A wish less ardent far inspires
  Than mine to be with you.
No life-boat brave, on baffling wave,
  Hangs more intent than I—

My coming wait, at Glory's gate,
  My Darling, do not die!

As sunbeam searches dungeon drear,
  Unwilling to depart,
Till through some chink its light shall cheer
  The captive's sinking heart,
My love will strive, whilst hope's alive,
  To catch thy languid eye—
My coming wait, at Glory's gate,
  My Darling, do not die!

Oh! tell the seraph band, who long
  To hail their sister fair,
What agony will mar their song
  If I may not be there;
How can we part, heart torn from heart,
  And never say "good-bye?"
My coming wait, at Glory's gate,
  My Darling, do not die!

——:o:——

Virtue and Bliss!

VIRTUE and Bliss! Oh! happy pair!
  Whom no divorce can sever;
Ye are as faithful as ye're fair,
  For ever, and for ever.

Twin pearls ! whose union never breaks—
  The gift of one dear Giver—
Ye kiss each other's glowing cheeks
  For ever, and for ever.

The strongest links that friendship knows
  May part, rejoining never ;
But ye are linked together close
  For ever, and for ever.

The fragile hopes of youthful love
  A ruthless blow may shiver ;
But yours shall last, in Heav'n above,
  For ever, and for ever.

The fondest couple ere were wed
  Must part at death's dark river ;
But ye can not be sunderéd
  For ever, and for ever.

——:o:——

Sin and Misery.

CLOSER linked than wedded pair,
  Wand'ring on, they know not whither—
Wretched, restless everywhere—
  Sin and misery go together.

Night or morning, light or dark,
  Sunshine bright, or wintry weather—
Twin masts of a storm-tossed barque—
  Sin and misery go together.

Wheresoever sin has gone,
  Wand'ring there, or wand'ring hither,
He is never found alone—
  Sin and misery go together.

Halting wretch, and wrinkled hag,
  Never can they break their tether;
Sharing crust, and sharing rag,
  Sin and misery go together.

Shade and substance not so true,
  No so constant to each other;
Through all lives, all ages through,
  Sin and misery go together.

——:o:——

Lines on a Sham Dignitary.

INFLATED fool! in whose complacent face
The mildest eye no modest line can trace,
Thy fame is great—it has expanded fast—
But, bubble-like, it will collapse at last.

Thou hast, balloon-like, reached a wond'rous height,
Because compared with all around thou'rt light;
But test thy greatness, prick it with a pin,
Thy flight shall end, thy swift descent begin;
And all shall know, what now I dare to guess,
That thou hast ris'n by force of emptiness.

——:o:——

The First Notes of the Blackbird.

SING! sing!
Herald of spring!
Sweetly announcing the virgin year;
Suff'ring and pain
May revive again,
When the welcome message they gladly hear.

Sing! sing!
Herald of spring!
Perched on the branch that is leafless yet;
Trumpet it shrill
From thy yellow bill,
Awaking the primrose and violet.

Sing! sing!
Herald of spring!

Drear as the prospect is, dark as the day,
Clear be the note
From thy gen'rous throat,
Foretelling that winter has passed away.

Sing! sing!
Herald of spring!
Summon the guests to these vacant bowers!
Sing till the sad
Are by hope made glad,
And the deaden'd heart has put forth its flow'rs.

Sing! sing!
Herald of spring!
Scatter the tidings to east and west!
"The storm is past,
There is calm at last,
And soon all the earth shall have peace and rest."

Sing! sing!
Herald of spring!
Prophecy sweetly of flow'rs and songs!
Thy simple voice
Bids the heart rejoice
Which is crushed by grief and for comfort longs.

Charity.

GEM ! of all gems the rarest !
  Sparkling with rays divine ;
Fit to adorn the fairest ;
  Charity be thou mine !

Gold ! of all gold the purest !
  Thou hast the truest ring ;
Thou can'st enrich the poorest,
  Thy loss beggars a king.

Flow'r ! of all flow'rs the sweetest !
  Blooming in richest dyes ;
Thine is the fragrance meetest
  To perfume Paradise.

Crowns and the pearls that grace them—
  All that men "precious" call—
In the true balance place them,
  Thou dost outweigh them all.

Wealth may bring others pleasure,
  I will go search for thee ;
Mines cannot yield a treasure
  Equal to charity.

Every flow'r we cherish
  Fades before winter's breath;
Thou only canst not perish—
  More than a match for death.

He who has thee is blesséd;
  Curséd the man must be—
Even by fortune caresséd—
  Who has not charity.

Thou makest earth a heaven;
  Thou art a heaven in store;
He to whom thou art given
  Has not a wish for more.

Charity, I adore thee;
  I worship at thy knee;
Oh! cast thy mantle o'er me,
  And give thyself to me.

——:o:——

Faith.

DESPISED by fools, by fools alone despised;
Prized by the sage, by sages only prized;
There's naught on earth (as sacred Scripture saith)
Like simple faith.

Let worldlings, cheats, and cunning liars all,
Before their gods with servile flattery fall;
Whate'er thy fate—reduced to thy last crust—
Make faith *thy* trust.

Doubt God, and count thy gains in earthly dross;
The more thou hast, the greater is thy loss;
Trust Him, and losing all thou dost obtain
The greater gain.

Dives sought wealth, and thought that he did well,
But his guilt-burden dragged him down to hell;
The faith of Lazarus—to beggary driven—
Raised him to Heaven.

——:o:——

Despair.

I AM forgotten—
  Left in this prison-house to fret, and die;
The dead, whose bones are long decayed and rotten,
  Are thought of more than I.

By friend and brother
  I have been long held castaway, and lost;
And she has given herself unto another,
  Whose heart I trusted most.

All hope departed,
They have forsaken who once held me dear;
And I, repentant now, and broken-hearted,
Must pine, and perish here.

A ship deserted—
Left, in despair, upon a lonesome sea,
Far from its course by wind and wave diverted—
The semblance is of me.

Silently drifted—
Onwards! onwards ever! with quivering, plunging prow
I reel, and sink, now on the billow lifted,
And dashed beneath it now.

Oh that kind Heaven
Would send a whirlwind from the unseen shore,
And that these waves, by wilder fury driven,
Would quickly whelm me o'er.

——:o:——

Spring.

Be hushed! ye bards of ruder note;
Hark! how the distant thickets ring!
To-day, the blackbird tunes his throat,
And summons Earth to crown the Spring.

Hear him, ye snowdrops pure and white,
  Ye crocuses of rainbow hue;
Ye daffodils of yellow bright,
  He bids you deck the glade anew.

Adorn yourselves, ye banks and dells,
  With primroses and verdure gay;
Ye tow'ring hills, let heather-bells
  Your "heighs and howes" once more array.

Ye streams and burns that wildly rush,
  And murmur hoarsely all day long,
Let crystals from your fountains gush,
  Responsive to this minstrel's song.

Ye birds, that droop with "chittering" wing,
  Prepare to sing your artless lays;
Ye lambkins, form a fleecy ring,
  And gambol, bleating, on the braes.

Ye stately woods, with varying green,
  Soft shade, and shelter broadly cast,
And bow your heads, with graceful mien,
  Till beauty's virgin queen has passed.

Be calmed ye winds, ye clouds retire,
  Ye Heav'ns! be draped in garments meet;

Shine forth, O Sun! with temper'd fire,
  And lend thy glory to the fete.

Wake up, my soul! and string the lyre;
  Whilst these to Spring attune their lays,
Sing thou an anthem reaching higher,
  And Nature's God with rapture praise.

——:o:——

Contentment.

WHAT blooming flow'r, in bed or bow'r,
  With sweet content can vie?
What lily's grace, or rose's face,
  So charm the gazer's eye?

What fragrant scent does sweet content
  Give life in light or gloom?
Not mignonette, nor violet,
  Can garden so perfume.

Stern Nature's child! like daisy wild,
  To life unseen it starts;
Nor care bespeaks, nor culture seeks,
  But thrives in simple hearts.

It decks the grove, where faith and love
  Have raised the lowly cot;
But flies the shades of princely glades,
  Where trust and truth are not.

It loves to blow midst frost and snow,
  Like spring-time's early flow'rs;
And blooms alone, when summer's gone,
  To cheer life's winter hours.

No flow'r so fit has ever yet
  Adorned the martyr's breast;
Or wreathed the head of modest maid
  In bridal garments dressed.

When hope is past, and death at last
  Has snatched the friend most dear,
What fitter thing can sorrow bring
  To lay upon the bier?

Oh, sweet content! when life is spent,
  And I have sought the tomb,
Around my bed thy fragrance shed,
  And crown it with thy bloom!

Ode.

AN UNFORTUNATE.

Poor mariner! thy voyage is o'er,
  Thy peril past;
And though shipwrecked and cast ashore,
  Thou'rt safe at last.

Few voyagers have ever crossed
  Life's surging sea,
So buffeted, so tempest-tossed,
  So tried as thee.

Ere thou the harbour well hadst cleared
  The storm was nursed;
Long ere the distant port was neared
  Its fury burst.

Thy shipmates left thee day by day,
  Until, bereft,
Thou hadst, to cheer thee on thy way,
  No com'rade left.

Thy rudder and thy compass gone!
  Through light and dark
Thou helplessly has drifted on,
  In thy frail barque.

The sport of every angry wave
  And blast that blew;
What dangers was it thine to brave!
  What pangs pass through!

Far from thy course by wild winds driven
  Thou long didst roam;
Till mercy sent this storm from Heaven
  Which drove thee home.

Poor mariner! thy voyage is o'er,
  Thy peril past;
And though shipwrecked and cast ashore,
  Thou'rt safe at last.

—:o:—

Reflections of an Unfortunate.

When palsy seizes on the brain,
  And light has all but gone;
When pleasure blossoms into pain,
  And reason quits its throne;
When fortune fails and friends have fled,
  And trouble's waves run high;
When horror haunts, and hope is dead,
  What can one do but die?

You bid me think, you bid me bear,
  You bid me strive and pray;
You point, and say, "The sun is there,
  As yet 'tis but mid-day."
Alas! for me no sun can shine,
  No light my eyes can bless;
The darkness of the deepest mine
  Is noon compared to this.

Go! tell the wreck that drifts along,
  The sport of every wave,
To stem the current deep and strong,
  The whirlwind's wrath to brave;
Go! tell the eagle, stricken through,
  To soar aloft again,
And from those heavens of liquid blue
  Gaze downwards on the plain.

Go! tell the way-worn traveller, lost
  Amidst the desert sands,
To rise and cross the vale he crossed
  In search of golden lands;
Till these obey thy high behest,
  In peace here let me lie;
The one thing that I want is rest—
  What can I do but die?

Descend, O Gentle Sleep!

DESCEND, O gentle sleep, descend!
  And shut the flood-gate of my woes;
Forgetfulness is now my friend,
  My only comforter, repose.

For me the sun now shines in vain;
  My days are long, my nights are brief;
Each morning brings increasing pain,
  Each evening more desired relief.

I am the tender, frosted flow'r
  That droops 'neath morning's burning beam;
When clouds in darkness round me low'r,
  Their dews revive me in my dream.

By day my loves and friendships fade,
  But murky midnight cheers their bloom,
And brings them back through death and shade,
  Like rosy cherubs, from the tomb.

Frail loves, and friendships, fading soon,
  And in this world reviving never!
Had I my wish this were the boon—
  To sleep, and dream of ye for ever!

Descend, O gentle sleep, descend!
And shut the flood-gate of my woes;
Forgetfulness is now my friend,
My only comforter, repose.

——:o:——

Written during a Thunderstorm.

WHILST far on high, in ranks of awful form,
The mustered clouds of Heav'n majestic low'r,
That voice is raised which stills the raging storm,
And Nature, trembling, owns its sov'reign pow'r.

No shadow moves, no drooping leaf is stirred;
The hills are mute, and mute the spreading plains;
Around, above, as in some lone churchyard,
Unbroken stillness, solemn silence reigns.

God's eye looks downward! and the vivid flash
Has traversed earth around, from pole to pole;
He speaks! and lo! the rending mountains crash,
As forth his words in echoing thunders roll.

If haply spared as past the bolt has sped,
Man shares the tremors of this trying hour;
But, with the cloud dissolving o'er his head,
Dissolves his sense of God's resistless pow'r.

ON THE SAME OCCASION.

GOD! when thy voice is raised on high,
  Who trembles not to hear?
When gleams the lightning of Thine eye,
  Who feels not Thou art near?

Forbid that when the bolt has sped
  We should forget Thy pow'r,
Or cease to own thy presence dread
  When clouds no longer low'r.

Thy omnipresence be impressed
  By Nature's ev'ry form;
And Thy omnipotence confessed.
  Alike in calm and storm.

Thus may we meet Thy glance at last
  Without a qualm of fear;
Thus calmly as our doom is passed
  Thy voice majestic hear.

——:o:——

Farewell.

FAREWELL! were life itself the cost
  Unfalt'ringly the word were spoken;
Nor thee, nor thine, shall ever boast
  That I like colt was tamed and broken.

Farewell! 'twere vain to further strive
  To prop a plant whose life has fled,
To fan, and feebly keep alive,
  The embers of a fire that's dead.

Farewell! the heart which cannot hate
  May learn to pity and despise thee,
And curse the hour, alas! too late,
  When first it stooped to trust and prize thee.

What led to loyal love's defeat
  Eternity alone can tell,
And till on its far shore we meet,
  Once more, and yet again—Farewell!

——:o:——

Oh! Send Me a Breeze.

"Oh! send me a breeze"—cried one ill at ease,
  Who had long been held wind-bound;
With his crew complete, and a precious freight
  In his good ship tight and sound.

It arose at last—'twas a welcome blast!
  And a comely sight was he,
As he crossed the bar, to sail forth afar,
  And to buffet the angry sea.

But, alas, alas! that it came to pass,
  He was wrecked ere the day was o'er;
The blast rose ere night to a whirlwind's height,
  And o'erwhelmed him not far from shore!

When across life's sea thou art flying free,
  Should misfortune thy course arrest,
Do not fret or wait 'neath the flapping sail—
  The dead calm may perhaps be best.

Do not cry too loud for a full-bent shroud,
  Lest you waken the whirlwind's wrath;
God is overhead—have your canvas spread;
  And contentedly keep your path.

——:o:——

Address to Sleep.

COMPOSED AT 2 A.M. (IN BED).

Oh, Sleep! thou sly and fickle jade!
  No confidence can I put in thee;
Thou art a shy and artful maid,
  And one can neither woo nor win thee.

Thou'rt like the rattle, bright and grand,
  Which "grannie" sent her babe, to cheer it;

Which always slipped from my plump hand,
  Just at the time I wished to hear it.

Thou'rt like the butterfly I chased
  From flow'r to flow'r, in life's gay morning;
Within my reach when nearest placed
  To capture thee my efforts scorning.

Thou'rt like the saucy little queen,
  Who first with my affections sported,
Who pricked my heart, with glances keen,
  And colder grew the more I courted.

Thou'rt like the fortune I pursued,
  Which, in the market, long I sought me;
Which mocked my labours, oft renewed,
  And only disappointment brought me.

Thou'rt like the friends I trusted most,
  By whose lean ghosts my life is haunted;
Who early counted friendship's cost,
  And fled from me when help I wanted.

Thou'rt like the greasy, old felt hat,
  Which I, perforce, must wear on Sunday;
Which flies about, this way and that,
  Just when the weather's cold and windy.

Thou'rt like the button of my shirt,
  Which broke, or yielded at the sewing,
Just when I dressed to feast, or flirt,
  Or was to dance, or dinner going.

You're like the glass, whose sparkling tide,
  When least required, was at the highest;
Which ebbed when I was gaping wide,
  And when my throat and tongue were driest.

You're like the pipe I filled to-night,
  Which fell as I prepared for smokin'—
Before the taper I could light—
  And into "smithereens" was broken.

I cannot now, though racked with pains,
  Get any rest or comfort out thee;
But here must lie and tax my brains,
  To fit these rhymes, and sing about thee.

Oh, Sleep! thou sly and fickle jade!
  Take pity on a constant lover;
Accept the simple verse I've made,
  And let me quietly topple over.

The Penitent's Tear.

WHEN the angels, rebellious, had hopelessly striven,
Lost all, and been banished from bliss and from Heaven,
It was *this* made hell's caverns so dark and so drear—
Not one of the host shed a penitent tear.

Looking back to that hour when the thunder-peal broke,
And, guilty and fallen, *our* parents awoke,
Through the darkness of ages what star shines so clear?—
The one star of hope—'tis the penitent's tear.

On the threshold of Paradise—withering!—lost!—
It fell, as that threshold in sorrow was crossed;
The avenger, relenting, averted his spear,
And mercy was won by the penitent's tear.

Hope returned on swift wing; and from that hour to this
Earth's bitterest woe has been mingled with bliss;
For, in sorrow to comfort, in danger to cheer,
Still shines—shines for ever—the penitent's tear.

A SIL

Floats so

And far below

Attends her cons

Love.

The dove descends by gentle silken wings
The shadow bounds below,
And woos her downwards from the he sky,
And will not let her go. he flings

With fluttering wings the happy dove
At last flies earthward prone;
The eager shadow clasps his love, ights;
And lo! the two are one.

heights,

——:o:——

The Bereaved Mother.

My loved and lost! whom death endears;
Dost thou behold my bosom torn?
Dost see these unavailing tears
Outgushing from a heart forlorn?

But yesterday I called thee mine,
  And fixed my earthly hopes on thee;
My hopes more closely round thee twine,
  Now thou art in Eternity.

They surely lie who dream that death
  Such bands as bound our hearts can sever,
And that with life's departing breath
  Souls so united part for ever.

I heed not man, whose lips profane
  Can utter such a heartless lie;
To doubt that we shall meet again
  Were treason against God Most High.

When looking earthward all is dark;
  No answer from the grave is giv'n;
But light on high my eye can mark,
  I hear a "still small voice" from Heav'n.

I see a light, I hear a voice,
  I am not left to dark despair;
But in the blessed faith rejoice
  That thou art in thy Father's care.

A Warning.

THE nether millstone 's hard (they say),
And chill the churchyard mould;
But harder, chiller far, than they
A loving heart grown cold.

The slumb'ring, ice-bound stream may sing
When summer comes to reign;
But friendship frozen at its spring
Flows never more again.

Sunshine and show'r may cheer the tree
Whose blossoms round it lie;
Love re-created cannot be—
Once blighted it must die!

Blow not again, thou bitter gust!
Upon affection true;
Nor lay its greenness in the dust,
Where once so fair it grew.

Betrayed.

MAN fathoms Ocean's deepest part,
  And Earth's most dreary mine,
But, woman! thy deceitful heart
  Defies his longest line.

The sweetest smile upon thy cheek
  Conceals the blackest lie;
The softest words thy tongue can speak
  The basest infamy.

When light is beaming in thine eye
  'Tis time for man to fear,
And he is bold who does not fly
  When falls thy treach'rous tear.

Strength, wisdom, goodness, all have sighed
  Thy faith with cords to bind;
Alas! they might as well have tried
  To tie the inconstant wind.

Thou art for dotards old and grey,
  Or youngsters fresh from school;
But he who gives his manhood's day
  To woman is a fool.

Thou art the idle wanton flow'r
  That with each zephyr plays,
That changes with the changing hour,
  And ev'ry love betrays.

Thou art the icicle that gleams
  Most brightly in the cold,
Dissolving quick when noontide beams
  Its frailties all unfold.

I would not trust a woman now,
  Though fair as God has made;
Not though she had her modest brow
  Who Potiphar betrayed.

——:o:——

The Dying Mother.

THE mother from her babe to part!
  To fondle it and die!
I hear the tale, and from my heart
  A tear steals to my eye.

'Twixt life and death, 'twixt bliss and pain!
  How must the soul be riv'n,
Thus drawn by love's most potent strain
  At once to earth and heav'n!

When pangs so keen the bosom rend,
  When frailty bears such grief,
How impotent the fondest friend!
  Good Shepherd! grant relief.

Oh bless the tender little lamb
  Upon that pillow lying;
Compassionate the stricken dam
  Who on that bed is dying.

If one sweet seraph thou canst send
  More gentle than another,
Let *her* above the infant bend,
  Let *her* console the mother.

——:o:——

Hope.

When sin had cursed creation,
  And bliss from man was reft;
'Midst Eden's desolation
  One blooming flow'r was left.

When all its songs were ended,
  One note was heard to rise—
With sobs and wailings blended—
  O'er with'ring Paradise.

When cherubims, affrighted,
  Fled earth, and heav'n regained;
In her fair garden, blighted,
  One of the band remained.

The fair flow'r fadeth never;
  The sweet song cannot die;
Hope hovers here for ever,
  Beneath the darkest sky.

Whilst sin's polluting water
  Its wid'ning current rolls,
That flow'r will fragrance scatter,
  To comfort fainting souls.

That song all men are hearing
  At earth's remotest ends,
The heart in sorrow cheering,
  Where'er their pathway wends.

When Death's dark shadows fear us,
  That angel still is near;
To strengthen us, and cheer us,
  Amidst the darkness drear.

Bless'd be the God that left us
  This treasure unalloyed,
What time the fall bereft us,
  And all beside destroyed.

"Will Father Come?"

"WILL father come?"—an idiot lad
  The question asked with piteous cry,
Who, in the house for fools and mad,
  Uncared for, had lain him down to die.

"Will father come?"—like yearning child
  Whose mother has been lost, he cried;
And vacant laugh and curses wild
  To his appeal alone replied.

With outstretched hands and hectic cheek,
  He rose upon that friendless bed;
And gazed around in vain to seek
  The help which had for ever fled.

His eye was dark, and large, and bright,
  And like a dazzling brilliant shone;
It had a strange unearthly light,
  Though reason's light was quenched and gone.

The coverlet was spotless white,
  The shirt of brightest scarlet hue—
I sometimes wake, at dead of night,
  To find that picture in my view.

"Will father come?"—it touched a heart
By nature and by habit rude,
And one who played a nurse's part
With faltering accent said—he *would.*

They laid him gently back to rest,
And gently smoothed his pillow, too
And laid the sheet upon his breast,
As gently as rough men may do.

Silent! as night to morning wore,
The drowsy watchman thought he slept:
Alas! he slept to wake no more—
The nurse's promise had been kept.

As pale as marble! cold as clay!
His dark locks on the pillow lying!
Now mute! and motionless! he lay,
As they had laid, and left him dying.

"Thank God!" said one, "that boy is dead;"
The other stood a moment dumb,
Then whispered, as the sheet he spread,
"He is at rest!—*his Father's come!*"

On the Sudden Death of a Rich and Prosperous Merchant.

OH Death! if thine arrow e'er glances aside,
If thy hand can at any time shake,
The shaft from thy bow by which Crœsus has died
Must have gone to his heart by mistake.

There were beggars in thousands not far from his door,
But his riches pen hardly could sum;
There were hundreds afflicted with sickness and sore,
But his paunch was as round as a drum.

Close dwelling beside him were liar and knave,
But his virtue was ev'ry one's theme;
His neighbours were fools, and would oft misbehave,
He as prudent as puss licking cream.

His head was not bald, nor had Winter's cold breath
On his beard left its hoar-frost or rime;
Appearances, so far from pointing to death,
Indicated a life at its prime.

When yesterday saw him engrossed upon "'Change,"
He had no thought of *this* change to-day;

Whilst settling accounts he had no thought—how strange!
  Of the debt he was shortly to pay.

He was building a mansion far out in the Park,
  And went daily its progress to see;
Not dreaming of that house, so narrow and dark,
  Where his home was so shortly to be.

Alas! from the fate with which Crœsus has met,
  We may learn that old lesson so sure—
A lesson we all are so prone to forget—
  Who has nothing but riches is poor.

A fortune beneath, and no treasure on high—
  Can investment less certain be made?
No dwelling on earth, but a home in the sky!
  How can such an inheritance fade?

How foolish to fret ourselves gath'ring a heap,
  Which the next hour that strikes may consume;
What madness to sow what Death's sickle must reap,
  And go sheaveless away to the tomb.

On Hearing a Tower-bell Rung at the Usual Evening Hour.

OLD TOWER! since first thy bell was rung
  A generation's passed away—
Not one who heard its warning tongue
  When first it sounded, hears to-day.

Some heard but once, some heard for years,
  To some it rang its warnings on
Till they were bowed like ripest ears,
  And even they have long been gone.

It rang to hail the infant's birth;
  It rang o'er couples wedded fast;
It tolled, and pealed, come woe or mirth,
  But rang the knell of all at last.

How oft he'll listen none can tell;
  But surely it were wise to take
The lesson of this passing bell,
  And timely preparation make.

From day to day, from year to year,
  As comes its loud and solemn tone,
We, one by one, will disappear,
  Till all who hear it now are gone.

Even whilst I write the sound it gives
  Is waning into silence deep—
No fitter emblem of our lives;
  A few pulsations, then—asleep!

——:o:——

The Asylum Ball.

A MADHOUSE shakes above my head
  With thumping, and with prancing;
Do you suppose that I'm in dread?
  Oh, no! they're only—dancing!

They jump, as on the music flows,
  Like midges in a sunbeam;
The poorest wretch forgets his woes,
  And pleasure is his one dream.

Whilst they appear as happy all
  As cows amongst sweet clover,
I sigh and think—the daft-folks' ball
  Will very soon be over.

'Twill very soon be past and gone;
  Grief waits for their returning;
And in their rooms, so cold and lone,
  Their joy will change to mourning.

Man's life is like the daft-folks' ball;
He dances and grows weary,
Then leaves the world—an empty hall—
And seeks the grave so dreary.

——:o:——

Preparing for Battle.

SOUL! summon'd to dread battle,
Gird thou thyself with faith;
Then, midst its roar and rattle,
Thou'rt safe from wounds and death.

In pride or passion mail thee—
A dart may pierce them through;
A suit of gold may fail thee,
And crush thee, falling, too.

Be thou with knowledge gifted,
And harnessed, *cap-a-pie*—
A pigmy's arm uplifted
Thou still mayst shake to see.

With friendship's fence surround thee—
Its strength may prove untrue:
The guard whom thou hast found thee
May turn and strike thee through.

By faith's bright breast-plate shielded,
  No foe thou needst to fear;
No weapon, giant-wielded,
  Can pierce what thou dost wear.

Thou art that armour wearing
  Which victors all have worn;
That gleaming lance thou'rt bearing
  Which laughs defence to scorn.

Omnipotence to aid thee!
  Leagued with the hosts of Heav'n!
The foes which had dismay'd thee
  Are atoms whirlwind-driv'n.

Go forth with brow undaunted!
  Though fiends be in the field—
Though Hell's black flag be flaunted—
  To conquer—not to yield.

Earth's martyr-heroes, watching,
  From Glory's gate look down;
To see thee victory snatching,
  And hail thee with thy crown!

My Neighbour and Me.

When at ourselves we turn to look
  We look as at the noonday sun;
Our eyes the brightness cannot brook,
  And as for spots, why! there are none.

Upon our neighbour bid us stare,
  Our sight is as the eagle's, strong;
How bright so e'er his virtues glare,
  We can detect the smallest wrong.

Short-sighted are we, every one,
  Our faults or failings called to scan;
But our short-sightedness is gone
  When we inspect our fellow-man.

Upon our own good name a blot
  Is unobserved though e'er so vile;
But we discern the faintest spot
  Upon our brother's at a mile.

Oh! would that Heav'n taught man to see
  Himself as he beholds his friend;
Then charity enthroned would be,
  And censure's wretched reign would end.

The Asylum Dog.

A NOBLE dog! of noble name!
"Duke" shall not die unknown to fame,
To future ages he'll descend,
Admired as mis'ry's faithful friend.

He sits hard by—the kindly brute!
Clad in a curly silken suit;
With ears depending, combed and trig,
Grave as a judge in robes and wig.

His portly form and pleasant face,
And manners of such ease and grace,
Might well adorn the grandest hearth,
And all become his noble birth.

Oh, that all judges were as wise!
Then justice no one would despise;
Oh, that all lords had such a look!
Then no wretch dare insult a duke.

His name be honoured far and wide,
To teach that breeding is not pride;
That those who scorn the poor may be
Ashamed of sham nobility.

He quits the haughty of the earth
To lodge with men of modest worth:
And flies the couch in grandeur spread,
To lie upon a pauper's bed.

Amidst the wretched and forlorn
He spends his days from night to morn;
Like minister, or angel, sent
To share their dreary banishment.

Unfit for life's deceit and craft,
Wise fools pronounce us mad or daft;
But "Duke" no sophistry can blind—
Instinct is more acute than mind.

Men madder than the man they guard
May use the hapless idiot hard,
But not the dog, adored and dear,
He loves the wildest maniac here.

With watchful eye and footstep slow,
He follows wretchedness and woe;
Obedient to their least command,
And proud to kiss their proffered hand.

He gambols through the weary day
To drive despondency away,

And through the long night loves to wait,
Cheering some wretch that's desolate.

Here, in defiance of their rules,
He lives to cheer and comfort fools,
Though for his service to the sick
Repaid at times with curse or kick.

Daft men have wit to know their friends,
And for such folly make amends;
They pat his head and comb his hair,
And oft with him their morsel share.

"Poor Duke," they say, and with surprise
The dog looks up into their eyes,
And answers, as retreiver can,
With wagging tail, "Poor ill-used man."

To lives far down on mis'ry's list,
His ministrations have been blessed,
Far more than sermons preached for pay,
Supplied by mock philanthropy.

Long may he live! and when he's dead
May fitting tombstone grace his head,
To tell a race so very wise
The spot where their superior lies.

Superfine Whisky.

Oh, whisky superfine!
  Why should spring water bore us
With *its* cold cup, when thine
  So strongly smells before us?

Have I been in a mess
  As wild as Bay of Biscay?
Most frankly I confess
  I owe it all to whisky.

Though rags and filth and debt
  Do ev'rywhere surround me,
My troubles I forget
  The moment I have found thee.

Beneath the strokes of fate
  Yon water-drinker winces,
But in this beastly state
  I'm happy as a prince is.

If in the morning dull,
  At night I can be brisk aye,
By putting 'neath my skull
  A little drop of whisky.

Not with "Guinness" or "Bass"
  Would I one moment tarry;

But whisky from a glass—
  That's what I love to carry.

When breakers roar ahead,
  The gill-stoup is my anchor;
When children cry for bread,
  Then whisky is my banker.

Let nature have her praise
  From some pale gutter-swiller.
I dedicate my lays
  Each one to the distiller.

May his tall chimneys smoke
  The country all around them;
Until their soot shall choke
  Abstainers—Heav'n confound them.

May he have many a son
  And daughter, fair and frisky,
And learn them ev'ry one
  To drink their father's whisky.

Oh, whisky superfine!
  Why should spring water bore us
With its cold cup, when thine
  So strongly smells before us?

Roadside Musings.

So let me live and act alway,
  And so my moments spend,
That when I've trod life's weary way,
  And near my journey's end,
    With hopes of rest
    Supremely blest,
  I may Death's vale descend.

The wretch who gives to false delight
  The hours of holiday,
Lies down with direful thought at night,
  The nightmare's trembling prey;
    So may not I,
    When called to die,
  A misspent life survey.

As children who have gathered flow'rs,
  When laid in peaceful rest,
Regather them through night's dark hours,
  In dreams, with double zest,
    So be my days,
    When strength decays,
  With pleasant mem'ries blest.

The wand'rer, at a friendly door
  Is happy to alight;
Prepared, his toils and trials o'er,
  To rest and pass the night;
    So, joy-inspired,
    May I, when tired,
  Behold the grave in sight.

——:o:——

The Merry Live as Long's the Sad.

LET not grief within thy breast
Lodge, or make a place of rest;
For the chamber of the mind
No worse tenant you can find;
Be strong! and keep an aspect glad—
The merry live as long's the sad.

Worn and worried all day through,
Lay your troubles out of view;
Hopes decayed, or prospects fled,
Say your pray'r, and go to bed;
Then waken up with aspect glad—
The merry live as long's the sad.

Gloom is darken'd by a sigh;
Dance or sing, and it will fly;
Ease your heart, forget your pain,
Then life's beam will rise again;
O'er-weight the horse, its chance is bad—
The merry live as long's the sad.

Forced with goods or gold to part,
Shall the loss corrode your heart?
Shunned by friends, or shamed by foes,
Shall chagrin increase your woes?
Be brave! and keep an aspect glad—
The merry live as long's the sad.

Conscience-stricken for your sin,
Bid repentance enter in;
Be sincere and watch with care,
But keep far from dark despair;
Accept what comfort's to be had—
The merry live as long's the sad.

Load her to the very lip,
You will sink the bravest ship;
Fill the heart with anxious care,
What worse cargo can it bear?
Quick! pitch it overboard, my lad—
The merry live as long's the sad.

When bright skies your eye perceives,
Reckon then on longest eves;
Clouds, or heav'ns of sober grey,
Bring a dark and shorten'd day;
Wear thou always an aspect glad—
The merry live as long's the sad.

——:o:——

After Disappointment.

Oh! for a land of beauty rare,
  Where nothing fair can fade;
Where song is ever in the air,
  And greenness in the glade.

Oh! for a calm and sunlit sea,
  On which no storm can rise,
Whose breast reflects, eternally,
  The blue of cloudless skies.

Oh! for a quiet, safe retreat,
  Which strife can ne'er invest;
Where white-robed peace has fixed her seat,
  And innocence found rest.

Oh! for a home where tranquil bliss
  In constant volume flows;

Where life is one long happiness,
  Without a break or close.

Oh! for a friendship firm and fast,
  And gentle as 'tis true;
Oh! for a heart whose love will last
  All generations through.

Oh! for the first, best gift of Heav'n,
  A simple mind, content—
Let this last boon to me be giv'n,
  And all I ask is sent.

——:o:——

Modern Poetry.

OUR modern bards—a most obnoxious school—
Must write in cipher, and hold him a fool
Who tells "unvarnished" tales, off-hand and free,
Without involvement or obscurity.
What genius transcendental makes its aim
These fops of literature link with shame;
Their complex lines they think superbly grand
Because so few their meaning understand;
And when the meaning is concealed from all
They think their style is quite *original.*

Plainness of speech, which our great masters graced,
Is not for them; they write for "men of taste;"
Scorn "vulgar minds," and only take their due
From the so-called "discriminating few."
Their thoughts are oysters—a great pearl in each—
Which skilful diving, and nought else can reach;
They shine like distant, *very* distant stars,
Which ne'er were seen save by astronomers;
They are deep riddles whose chief merit lies
In hiding truth from all but lynx's eyes—
Pronounce their text quite easily understood,
And you have damned them as no critic could.
Buy telescopes who will to catch their light,
I'll watch the stars that shine to naked sight;
Dive for their pearls who may, I'll try the beach
And pick up those which lie within my reach;
Let "taste" and "culture" in their pastures feed,
I'll feast on bards who write for *all who read.*

——:o:——

A Suggestion.

I HAVE heard that should one so unfortunate be
As to fall overboard and sink down in the sea,

Whilst he flounders about, and gives way to his fears,
With a hundred bells ringing in each of his ears,
Ev'ry act of his past life distinctly appears.
As his weight bears him down and he struggles to rise,
And the fiend-like salt water to strangle him tries,
When the vision referred to appears to his eyes.
Ev'ry one he has wronged stares him full in the face;
Ev'ry sin perpetrated takes prominent place;
All the deeds which he thought were concealed and forgotten
Can be read as if they marble tablets were wrote on.
'Tis a *very* strange fact, and in thinking it o'er,
I have struck an idea not started before.
In an age which provides us so much to bewail,
When such cheating and lying and meanness prevail,
When our dastards and scoundrels so freely forget—
As if conscience were dead, their deceit and their debt,
Would it not be a wise thing each villain to seize,
Tie a rope to his waist, and a weight to his knees,
And, by way of recalling his crimes, let him be
For a time left to *think* in the depths of the sea?

Life and Death.

WHY do we sing when babes are born,
  And weep when old men die;
With smiles behold life's op'ning morn,
  With tears its ev'ning sky?

Does birth not grief and woe entail?
  Is death not age's friend?
Is life so sweet that we should hail
  Its dawn, and mourn its end?

What *is* our life? a feeble cry!
  A groan of anguish keen!
With less or more of misery
  And blighted hope between.

Thus Reason speaks; but Nature's voice—
  A stronger voice than ours—
Bids us beside the cot rejoice,
  And mourn in cypress bowers.

The rocking cradle has a tongue
  We cannot choose but hear;
And loudly speaks the knell that's rung
  When dust bestrews the bier.

From ev'ry quick'ning bud of spring
  A sense of joy we gain;
Nor can we see flow'rs withering
  Without a touch of pain.

As 'twas since here he dwelling had,
  'Twill be whilst man draws breath—
The thought of life will make him glad,
  And grieved the thought of death.

With mirth and smiles he still will hail
  The new-born infant's cry;
Nor will he ever cease to wail
  When hoary grandsires die.

——:o:——

On Seeing a Child Try to Walk.

OBSERVE the boy who ne'er has known
What 'tis to stand—to stand alone!
And of his features mark the play
As first he makes the bold essay.
One hand upon the friendly chair!
One arm uplifted in the air!
He gravely pauses to debate
His strength of limb, his body's weight;

He looks, he turns; resolved, afraid,
Till, lo! the last grand effort made,
With beaming face and shout of glee,
He stands beside his mother's knee.
No poet prouder of his bays;
Not Cæsar in his palmy days
So pleased, so satisfied, so blest,
As he who, fondled and caressed,
Proclaims the triumph he has won,
And crows—"Behold what *I* have done!"
As with the child, so with the man;
Life ends as life at first began:
At ev'ry stage, in ev'ry state,
Is found the longing to be great;
Some object calls for efforts new—
The dead alone seek nought to do—
And every living mother's son
Is proud of something *he* has done.

—:o:—

The Power of the Penny.

THE Englishman's god and the Englishman's king,
Thy praises, thou idol of bronze! let me sing—
From her who sits Queen down to poor beggar Jenny,
We all are thy slaves, thou omnipotent penny!

The Queen fills the throne and the lords make the laws;
The great House of Commons our purse's string draws;
But one reigns o'er all, far more potent than any—
There's no power so great as the power of the penny.

Our churches may boast of their subjects, and view
With pride the vast crowds who kneel down in the pew;
But what church can gather adherents so many
As that in which Englishmen bow to the penny?

The Press, in the pride of its heart, has of late
Presumed to the title of our "fourth estate;"
But first, second, third, fourth, and *fifth*, if there's any,
Thou art all in one—thou omnipotent penny!

Our piety's pure and our loyalty leal,
And great are our faith and our Christian zeal;
But strongest, most lasting affection of any—
The first and the last—is our love for the penny.

——:o:——

Immortality.

How sad were the thought that we parted for ever,
When once we shook hands on Eternity's shore!
That waving farewells as we crossed the dark river,
We waved them to friends we should meet never more.

Oh! how the fond grasp of our hands could we sever;
How plant a last kiss on the cheek of the dead,
If love and communion were over for ever,
And confidence quenched, when the spirit had fled?

Oh! why should friends weep, or love bow, broken hearted,
For those who are laid in the mansions of gloom?
Oh! why should we long to embrace the departed,
If no one returns from the gates of the tomb?

Begone! ye cold sceptics who leave us despairing,
Who quench immortality's tremulous beam—
Your madness and cruelty equal your daring—
Oh! spare us that light, though it *be* but a dream.

——:o:——

The Author and Critic.

LAST night I dreamed—behold the Nile!
And at my heels—a crocodile!
With cavern-jaws and sinuous length,
And scales defying steel and strength;
Which dodged me closely up and down
Until my breath had all but flown,
And with its eyes said, "Dare to seat ye,
And, by the Pharaohs, I will eat ye."

I ran, I swam, I crossed, recrossed,
And all but gave myself for lost;
But, in despair—as lightning quick—
I seized the nearest rotten stick,
And brought it down upon his nose—
Lo! plump! into the stream he goes—
The meanest, cowardly, crawling skunk
That ever slime-wards slowly sunk.
Let bards and writers read the tale,
And scorn the critic's coat of mail;
Nor fly before each rav'nous creature
With gaping mouth and monstrous feature—
Despite of his assault untoward
'Tis ten to one he is a coward.
As Byron proved (poor Keat's forgot,
And hence that youth's unhappy lot),
There's nothing in the wide creation
For "critics" like sound castigation.
Though pleased to flog their neighbours' backs,
They have a wholesome dread of "whacks,"
Or blows from fist which firmly closes,
And comes too near their dainty noses.

To a Dead Babe.

SWEET bud! from fond affection torn,
  And trampled in the dust of death;
Dear babe! departed ere the morn
  Has gone which gave thy beauty breath.

I stand beside thy bier and weep—
  Oh! how this wounded heart it grieves;
Thou art so lovely in thy sleep!
  So tender thy unopened leaves!

Thine infant limbs, to rest composed
  Thy breast, still as the snowy bed
The dark-fringed eyes so softly closed!
  Can so much loveliness be dead?

I touch thy hand, I kiss thy brow;
  'Tis only adding pain to pain;
I'll plant thee in the earth, where thou,
  Sweet bud! wilt wake to life again.

On Seeing a Rhymer designate himself "Poet."

SOMETHING we have never heard
Tell us, if thou art a bard,
Some invention find and show it,
Thou who callest thyself "poet;"
Make us something new and strange;
Give us substance worth our "change;"
Sing a song which ne'er was sung,
Or, in mercy, hold thy tongue.

Paraphrasing some old story,
Simply for thine own name's glory;
Spinning verses by the mile
Merely to display your "style;"
Patient toil, yet nothing *made*—
Cold meat served with great parade—
Go to Solomon and ask
If this be the poet's task.

Out upon thy penny whistle!
As the rose is to the thistle,
So, if thou couldst only see,
Is the humblest bard to thee;

As the jolting cart close by
To the thunder-bolt on high,
So, if thou couldst only know it,
Thou art to the meanest "poet."

Poetry is an ambition
Fit for minds of high condition;
Nothing brings upon a fool
Such a weight of ridicule;
He would earn the name of "maker,"
And behold—an "undertaker!"
Who, to learn his doleful trade,
His own coffin first has made.

——:o:——

"Vanity of Vanities."

DECEITFUL as the gems which gleam
In yonder forest glade,
Made lustrous by the scorching beam
In which their glories fade.

Unstable as the arch of shade
The morning's brightness makes,
Which crumbles when the sunbeams fade—
Which every zephyr shakes.

Uncertain as Aurora's ray,
When, far as eye can range,
The heavens are draped in colours gay
Which only shine to change.

As fleeting as the moment's bliss
Of yonder virgin flake,
Which gently drops from heav'n to kiss
The bosom of the lake.

Expiring dews, frail shadows all;
Uncertain, changeful rays;
Soft snow-flakes melting as they fall—
Vain man, behold thy days!

——:o:——

Beware.

THERE is a gate which seems the gate of Heav'n,
Beware, beware!
Once pass these portals, and you may be driv'n
To black despair.

There is a path which seems the path to bliss;
Oh stay, oh stay!
Hark! heard you not that deadly serpent's hiss?
Away, away!

There is a house whence sounds of mirth arise;
Pass on, pass on!
These songs will sink, ere morning gilds the skies,
To sigh and groan.

There is a syren with a 'witching face,
Go by, go by!
Once yield thyself to her unblest embrace,
And you may die.

There is a cup filled up with sparkling wine;
Oh think, oh think!
Remorse and misery may yet be thine
If thou shouldst drink.

——:o:——

"There are no Roses now."

"FATHER! there are no roses now,"
A little maiden said;
As paced her sire, with pensive brow,
A path whose flow'rs were dead.

"No roses now"—ere spring returned,
A cold untimely gust
Had laid the child their loss who mourned
Beside them in the dust.

Above her, in the churchyard lone,
  Snow-laden branches bow;
And thus speaks her memorial stone—
  "There are no roses now."

——:o:——

The Penitent's Prayer.

THY boundless mercy, O Most High,
  Thy love, and that alone,
Emboldens such a wretch as I
  To kneel before Thy throne.

My falt'ring tongue can urge no plea—
  Extenuation none—
I madly went astray from Thee,
  And justly am undone.

The fiends I trusted mock me now,
  My heart is filled with gall,
And in my wretchedness I bow,
  And at Thy footstool fall.

No covering can conceal such guilt,
  No flood wash out such stain—
Avenge in justice if Thou wilt,
  How dare my voice complain!

Forgive! Oh God, I Thee entreat!
And grant this boon to me—
That I may worship at Thy feet
Through all Eternity.

——:o:——

Prayer in Anguish.

Oh God! the Father and the Friend!
Who called me into being first;
Be near me now if life must end,
And cheer me if my heart must burst.

From Thee I've wandered long and far,
But not beyond Thy love Divine;
Life of the distant wand'ring star!
Oh, in Thy mercy still be mine.

Though faint and feeble, quench not yet
The light that trembles in my rays;
Revive the spark about to set,
And let its brightness speak Thy praise.

On Seeing a Picture of Napoleon at Waterloo.

SOME call him a hero, and view with delight
The picture he makes in the midst of the fight;
In jack-boots, tight breeches, and, what they love more,
The well-known cocked hat, which so proudly he wore.

Some call him a hero, as pompous he rides
That noble white charger, with foam-freckled sides,
Whose nostrils, expanded, are telling afar
His joy (or his terror) in rushing to war.

Some call him a hero—oh! how the ranks reel!
'Midst thunder and smoke and the glitt'ring of steel;
The banners of France, how triumphant they fly!
Whilst Frenchmen are charging, and Englishmen die.

Some call him a hero, I'm not quite so civil;
I call him a monster, I call him a devil;
A blood-thirsty tyrant, as ever defaced
The world which his presence destroyed and disgraced.

Some call him a hero, a *devil* I say;
The dead and the dying are strewn in his way;
What sighing, and groaning, and grief, and despair,
That he his jack-boots and his cocked-hat may wear.

Some call him a hero, oh! how can they fail
To hear the deep sob, and the sky-piercing wail,
Which rise in the track of his blood-dripping blade,
From the hearts of the widows and orphans he made.

Some call him a hero—the blundering fools!
He tried to make men into tyrants and tools!
He may have been fearless, but Hist'ry has shewn
The cause that he fought for was ever his own.

Some call him a hero—thank God it is past;
He died on a rock in the ocean at last,
Like eagle rapacious—the emblem he bore—
In spite of the boots and the cocked-hat he wore.

Napoleon a hero? No! men have grown wise,
And should such another in Europe arise,
They'll hunt him, and hold him, and hang him in time,
And nip in the bud both his glory and crime.

Judge Not.

CONDEMN not thou thy brother man,
Nor lift the avenging rod;
No weak and erring mortal can
Usurp the throne of God.

He only sees into the past,
  Alone the present knows;
And to His righteous bar, at last,
  Each son of Adam goes.

Say not, "*This* man is ripe for hell,"
  Or "Heaven is *that* man's due;"
Such secrets God alone can tell—
  They are concealed from you.

Your eye may trace earth's hidden springs,
  And search the deeps below—
Your mind may compass many things,
  But man you cannot know.

Thy neighbour has, beneath his breast,
  Depths time will not reveal;
Which words and deeds—the worst and best—
  But darken and conceal.

Forbear to judge: with all thy might
  For grace and mercy call;—
He who would pray to Heav'n aright
  Must love and pray for *all.*

A Son's Christmas Letter to his Mother.

THIS hallowed day! on which Our Lord was born!
And laid—how lovely! on His mother's breast,
Recalls to me that less momentous morn,
When first to call *thee* "Mother" I was blessed.

God will not less regard the pray'r I raise—
The gift I offer on my bended knee—
The simple song of heartfelt thanks and praise,
That *all* are wreathed with grateful thoughts of thee.

He knows thy love! how o'er my infant years
Thou, Mary-like, didst watch with ceaseless care;
How gently thou didst dry my childhood's tears—
How tempt thy fledgling's wing to praise and pray'r.

Thou, next to Him whom we this day adore,
Hast ever been to me the best of friends;
And, next to Him, no friend will I love more,
Until the life which thou didst give me ends.

As from my natal hour the distance grows,
So, constant, grows my filial love to thee;
As evening's shadows nearer round thee close
The more may I thy strength and solace be.

To sorrows here it gives a darker shade,
That our fond hearts have been asunder riven;
The joys above will be more joyful made
If I with *thee* may share the bliss of Heaven.

For this, unceasing let thy prayer be—
That I may walk in virtue's heaven-ward road;
Unfit am I, on *earth*, to live with *thee*,
Oh, how unfit for thy assured abode.

My mother, dear! farewell! oh! fare thee well!
The love I bear to thee can not be sung;
Thy matchless worth I will not seek to tell,
Till I can do it with an angel's tongue.

——:o:——

Address to a Fashionable Pair.

Most noble sir! and you, most worthy madam!
Who on long lineage rest pretension's claim;
Why not go back at once to Father Adam?
And find in him the root of your *great name!*

Perhaps you cannot the idea brook
Of one related to your lofty race,
Who once a gard'ner's situation took,
And, by misconduct grievous, lost his "place."

The "fall!" I doubt not, you could gulp or swallow,
  But not the thought of humble toil or trade;
No length of ages can excuse or hallow
  The blot of poverty, or gild a spade.

Perhaps you dread, by going *too* far back,
  To run your blood into contamination;
Or meet—condemned to labour's up-hill track—
  That horror of "descent"—a poor relation!

You might restrict your "family" to the flood!
  But even that would not improve the matter;
There still would be the risk of common mud,
  Which would your spotless 'scutcheon all bespatter.

For years, you know, the chief of "Noah's line"
  Wrought, like a nigger, at his monstrous barque;
Nor did he know the way to "take his wine,"
  Unused, perhaps, to "liquor" in the Ark.

"Caste" might forgive the old man's getting drunk,
  But what of building ships and planting trees?
Why! he would smell like some confounded skunk
  When boiling pitch! in manure to the knees!

To Babel's rise should you confine your stock,
  There, too, is something which the mind bewilders;

The ancestor you found might wear a "smock,"
Or carry mortar to the impious builders.

'Tis difficult, indeed, to fix a date
At which one's safe from common human bein's!
And if you do not fix it *somewhat* late,
You run the risk of turning out—plebeians!

It *would* be pleasant to go cycles through
Before you ended your "ancestral list;"
But it is wiser, and much safer, too,
To let it end in half a century's mist.

'Twould gratify your vanity, I know,
To hear that you had sprung from Jezebel;
Or from "the rich man," who kept up a show,
And lived in style before he went to—hell!

But you might stumble on poor Mordecai!
Or Lazarus vile! or Mary Magdalene!
Whose kinmanship would make you "pipe your eye,"
And wish to God that you had never been.

"In with the Conqueror!" that is far enough;
You *had* an ancestor who flourished then,
And, though his lordship might be knave or "muff,"
You're sure he handled neither spade nor pen.

Nor for an honest living, ever since,
Did his decendants either spin or toil,
They *may* have shaved a king or kissed a prince,
But *that* "fine linen" does not stain or soil.

What? not an heir! can Heav'n be so unkind?
No prospect either? I begin to doubt you;
If none of your great name are left behind,
How *will* the universe get on without you?

——:o:——

A Lunatic's Epitaph.

HERE lies a man whom God was pleased
To visit with a mind diseased;
Who, robbed in manhood's youthful prime
Of life's first gift, was lost for time,
And left, like wreck upon the sea,
To drift into eternity.

What made his mind a vacant throne
Was never fully searched or known:
Some lay the blame on friendship's guile,
And some on love's deceitful smile;
But all—whate'er the cause—agree
That, once, his life was fair to see.

Like tow'ring tree whose graceful form
Is rent and bowed by thunderstorm,
He shrank as seasons came and passed,
Became like mould'ring stump at last,
And, to the verge of mis'ry brought,
A refuge in the madhouse sought.

God help the *weak*, the *poor*, and *old!*
Who find a home so cursed and cold—
When once they tread that threshold o'er
They part with hope for evermore;
Their earthly bliss is at an end,
And death becomes their bosom friend.

No other friend, in his last woe,
Was sent to him who sleeps below,
For he who writes has heard him cry,
"Oh God! in mercy let me die!"
And once, with death-damp on his brow,
"Thank Heav'n the gate is op'ning now."

I saw him die—a happy day—
I saw his unregarded clay;
I saw him from the "dead-house" borne,
Without one friend to weep or mourn;
Without a priest, without a pray'r—
What Christian men!—what Christian care!

Adorn the pulpit, crowd the pew,
And preach and pray, ye godly crew;
And take this comfort to your souls,
As through the aisle the anthem rolls,
Of what you've done to such as he,
God says, "*Ye've done it unto Me.*"

From this green turf so trim and neat—
Like velvet yielding 'neath your feet—
The nameless pauper, passed away,
Will rise upon the judgment day
To tell his tale, and 'twill go hard
If God *his* friends does not reward.

——:o:——

To a Monkey.

HAIL, cousin dear! in what degree
  Becomes not one like me to say—
I leave philosophers and thee
  To settle our paternity.

Enough for me, if you admit
  We to one ancient race belong;
And see, from where you smiling sit,
  A fam'ly likeness, weak or strong.

What? you shake hands! 'tis quite a treat
For one who holds my humble station
So warm a welcome here to meet—
A recognised, though poor relation.

Some, of whose kinsmanship I'm *sure*,
Turn up their nose at such as me;
And, simply because I am poor,
Relationship refuse to see.

The silly fools have travell'd less,
And seen far less of life than thou;
And so have not the good address
And grace which do me honour now.

Thanks to the sages, learned and wise!
Who traced our kinsmanship with thee;
And gave the world this great surprise—
Unskilled in genealogy.

A single look convinces me
That thou art of the common stock;
Of the same pod a sweet green pea—
A reg'lar "chip of the old block."

Unless I flatter them too much,
There's not a feature in your face
In which I do not trace a touch
Of *some one* in my native place.

There's Provost B——, who takes his seat
  Exactly in the way that you do!
So holds his head—so plants his feet—
  Undoubtedly a monkey-pseudo.

The parish clergyman who chatters
  To us in church resembles thee;
And climbs aloft—on sacred matters—
  Just as you climb upon your tree.

The learned thinker! Doctor Black,
  Placed in your cage, would so look through it;
And breaks a nut that's hard to crack
  Precisely as I see you do it.

I recognise in your keen glances
  A gifted author and a friend,
One of whose lengthen'd-out romances
  Your *tail* resembles—root and end.

Had you a pen behind your ear,
  And on your crown a powder'd wig—
"Young lawyer C——!" at once I'd swear—
  But he's a most confounded prig.

Then there's the fam'ly dandy—D——!
  Who at our parties plays first fiddle—
He has your profile to a T,
  And parts his hair so—down the middle.

I've heard how you the balance hold
  When judging betwixt cat and cat,
And I know fifty—I make bold !
  Who quite resemble you in *that.*

You keep the scales in motion going
  (Whilst clients cool their angry passion)
Till you've consumed what's claimed or owing—
  Now! that is just our legal fashion.

And lastly—for I keep you long—
  You have a fashion in your speech
Which all our bards and sons of song
  Try hard to imitate or reach.

Your language *none* can understand—
  Whate'er you know you do not show it;
And in the manner, rich and grand,
  I recognise the modern poet!

My cousin dear! let us embrace,
  And join in scorning human donkeys;
I know a thousand of the race
  Who might be proud to own the monkeys.

Wee Tittie-Tottie.

We love each child with which we're blest,
When they're not cross or naughty;
But one we like above the rest—
Wee Tittie-tottie!
Blessings on Wee Tittie-tottie,
Gently rocking at our knee,
Like a little golden boatie
On a rippling silver sea!

Who wakes us up at morning hour,
And tells us she's our "dawtie?"
Who meets us at the dinner hour?—
Wee Tittie-tottie!
Toddlin' but, and toddlin' ben,
Tottie on the move must be;
Like a golden-crested wren
In a shining apple tree!

When home we reach, worn out and tired,
And angry with the haughty,
Who prattles on, like one inspired?—
Wee Tittie-tottie!
Tottie ready for her bed,
Holding up her trailing gown,

Like a queen whose golden head
  Needs not any golden crown!

And when at night we breathe our prayers
  Beside the little cotie,
Who up to Heaven the message bears?—
    Wee Tittie-tottie!
Rosy cheeks and golden hair,
  Tottie, as asleep she lies,
Seems a little cherub fair
  On a visit from the skies!

——:o:——

"That Boy Willie."

Of all the romps that e'er were born
To plague a mother night and morn,
The worst that ever breeks has worn
    Is that Boy Willie!

'Twould tax a sergeant-major's skill
To make him stand at ease, or still—
There ne'er was such recruit to drill
    As that Boy Willie!

He like the kitten, springs about,
That wearies puss's patience out—
I'll have to take a cudgel stout
To that Boy Willie!

He's here and there, and all around,
Wherever there's forbidden ground,
But ne'er, when wanted, to be found,
Is that Boy Willie!

He runs and climbs, he leaps and flies,
All kinds of schemes and tricks he tries—
He trips and falls—now, hear the cries
Of that Boy Willie!

See! here he comes, with capless head,
And hair as if it ne'er were redd,
And hands and face as black's a spade—
Oh! that Boy Willie!

He has a sweet and pleasant smile,
A heart that's warm and free of guile,
Or I would wish I were a mile
From that Boy Willie!

The King of Song.

ONCE on a time our minstrels met
  A sov'reign king to choose,
Who should be crown'd and thron'd, and set
  To rule the realms of muse.

A wond'rous sight it was to see
  The joyous singers gather—
Birds came of high and low degree,
  Of ev'ry form and feather.

The crow sat perch'd—no judge so grave—
  In cloak of sable hue;
The swallow, from across the wave,
  On wing untiring flew.

The blackbird, with his yellow flute,
  Was seated near the sky;
The mavis, modest-like and mute,
  Upon a twig hard by.

In lower place, with equal grace,
  Sat finch of ev'ry coat,
Blue-bonnet small, and linnets all,
  And crowds of different note.

The sweet red-breast, in crimson vest,
  Sat bowing here and there,
And wagtail, shrill, could not sit still,
  So pleased to see the fair.

The yellow-hammer graced the brier;
  And through the thorn below
"The merry wren, from den to den"
  Kept jinkin' to and fro.

On earth beneath the turkey proud
  Was making circles wide,
The mincing peacock, harsh and loud,
  Fit neighbour! by his side.

All crowing cocks and gabbling geese
  And quacking ducks were there;
All birds that swim, or strut, or skim
  The field, or pool, or mere.

Hawks, eagles, and all birds of prey
  Came swooping from the skies;
But they were jeered and hiss'd away
  Amidst tumultuous cries.

When all had met, and all were set,
  And it was time to sing,

A sparrow bold hopp'd out untold—
First rival in the ring!

He chatter'd out a note or two,
But could not end his song;
For loud the sneers and laughter grew—
"Impudence! get along!"

The mavis sang his sweetest lay,
And plaudits owned his skill;
The blackbird ceased his flute to play
Midst louder plaudits still.

The linnet sweet, and finch so neat,
Each trilled his feebler note,
And, by-and-by, arose a cry
Of "Order! vote, vote, vote!"

A little bird, till then unseen,
A simple, modest bard,
Stepp'd out upon the turf so green,
Requesting to be heard.

"No, no, no, no!" was heard below—
"Another sparrow this!"
And peacocks squalled and turkeys bawled,
And geese set up a hiss.

Just then the sun peep'd through a cloud,
  And up the lark arose;
The envy of his rivals proud,
  The wonder of his foes!

Still up! still up! and loud and clear
  The heavenly strain descends,
Till envy's voice is hush'd, to hear,
  And foes are chang'd to friends.

Up! up! until a speck he shone
  Beyond the cloudlet driv'n;
And cries arose that he had gone
  From earth, away to heav'n.

Wild rapture all surmising stopp'd—
  "His name, his name, his name!"
When, circling, down the minstrel dropp'd,
  Still singing as he came.

Down! down! and thunders of applause
  The woods and vales repeat;
When on the turf from which he rose,
  The minstrel took his seat.

Thus was the lark—meek child of earth!
  Crown'd king of British song;
And thus, for aye, to modest worth
  May victory belong.

Self-Knowledge.

THERE'S one thing which a man must learn
  Long after leaving school—
To know himself, and to discern
  The fact that he's—a fool.

It matters not what books we read,
  Or who our teachers be;
Experience is a thing we need
  Ere we *ourselves* can see.

We think of what we are *to do*,
  When life is fresh and green;
But looking back, we can review
  What we have *done* and *been*.

And who, however good or wise,
  Sees not, in days gone past,
Enough—unless he shuts his eyes—
  To make him stand aghast?

Some never stay to look or think—
  Pleased with themselves, and toys—
But though such reach life's utmost brink,
  They cease not to be boys.

God pity him who backward peers
  Through life's inverted glass,
Pleased with himself at fifty years—
  It proves that he's—an ass.

One who his errors can forgive
  When over forty-nine,
Would not be wise were he to live
  As long as Noah's line.

Thrice happy he who, leaving books
  To learn in Nature's school,
From life's first rising backward looks,
  And sees that he's—a fool.

Whatever trials he may see,
  To honour he shall rise;
And this his epitaph shall be
  "He was exceeding wise."

A Fable.

A REIVISH rat had access got
Into an auld Ayr cadger's cot,
And, by his cunning saved from danger,
Had lived a while at "heck and manger,"
Till one day as he quietly stole
Across the floor and sought his hole,
The cadger saw him, horrified!
And ingress to the wretch denied,
By closing up the narrow pass
With bits of flint and bottle-glass.

The rat, disputing this arrangement,
And angry almost to derangement,
And vexed that it could not get in
As heretofore to bag and bin,
Began with might and main to claw
At the obstruction in the wa',
Till in his eager haste to pass
He scratched his nose upon the glass,
And with a squeal was glad to flee
Back to his birth-place by the sea.

Petitioners! accept the hint;
Beware of bottle-glass and flint—

Force not the door the ballot closes,
Or you may scratch your fussy noses;
And for your pains and push unguarded
Be with contempt and scorn rewarded.

——:o:——

Lines Suggested by the Result of a Recent Political Duel.

When gentlemen in open fight
Have striven to set a quarrel right,
The quarrel with the battle ends—
The gallant foes once more are friends,
And act as honour true demands
By lifting hats and shaking hands.

But there's a fool who, fairly beat,
Must whimper after his defeat;
Or look around for dirt to throw,
In spite, on his victorious foe;
Or stealthily his footsteps track
And try to stab him in the back—
Base coward! whosoe'er he be,
He shames the treach'rous Ashantee!

The bully struts, as cock'rel vain,
When he has thrashed some lesser wean,
But should he chance to meet his match,
And to his cost a Tartar catch,
He blubbers about—"My big brother,"
Or yells—"I'll go and tell my mother."

Such conduct we excuse in boys,
Or children quarr'ling o'er their toys;
But when o'er matters grave and great,
Concerning law, or church, or state,
Men come to years so basely act
They should to Coventry be sacked,
Or dabbled in the nearest pool
Their vicious virulence to cool.

——:o:——

A Wish.

Oh! Nature! bounteous, profuse,
And seldom deaf to strong desire
(If mortal man may dare to choose,
And not incur thy righteous ire),
Give gold, give fame, give all that's gilt,
To those who for such treasures long;
Nay! give men *wisdom* if thou wilt,
But give to me the "gift of song."

Not such a gift (the wish were vain)
  As makes a list'ning world admire—
I would not emulate *their* strain
  Who lead the Universal Choir;
No soaring lark—no piping thrush—
  No high-perched songster I would be;
The redbreast's twig—the linnet's bush,
  Would be a paradise for me.

To masters of the tuneful string
  I fondly lend a raptured ear;
And sometimes, too aspiring, sing
  A simple song, where none may hear;
But halting, harsh, and rude my note!—
  Oh! were it only tuned by thee,
Then might I dare the grove, and not
  Disturb the gen'ral harmony.

These lines, which limp on stilted legs,
  Could patience e'er inspire with wit,
Like hatching-hen upon her eggs,
  With care maternal I would sit;
And, feeling life beneath the shell
  (Contented as the weeks passed by),
In my snug nest would gladly dwell,
  And nurse to life my progeny.

Oh! happy lot, however poor,
  Could I to poesy aspire—
Write but one line which would endure —
  One verse which burned with heavenly fire;
One thirsty soul, on life's steep hill,
  Could I refreshed and gladden'd see,
By drinking from the silver rill
  That had its distant source in me.

So Tannahill, the modest bard,
  Who drank life's gall, and felt its sting,
Was well rewarded when he heard
  His song an artless maiden sing;
So Cowper, when the playful line,
  O'er which 'twas his delight to bend,
Had smoothed the path of life's decline,
  And pleased a simple female friend.

Twined though it be with piercing thorn,
  Fade though it may like thistle down,
Throned though I am 'midst jeers and scorn,
  Oh! let me wear the poet's crown.
Not all the wealth the Indies boast
  Can make me happy, losing thee;
I'm blest, though all beside is lost,
  If thou art mine, sweet poesy!

A humble theme—a modest muse—
  Oh! then, as deeply I can dream
As bankers rich, or jingling Jews
  Who nurse an infant golden scheme;
With ardour fierce, I court the Nine,
  And in the fond pursuit am lost,
Like him who opens up a mine,
  Or flatters statesmen for a post.

A happy couplet in my head—
  Let learn'd dulness wag his pate;
A verse with wise approval read—
  I envy not the prince his state;
Can I one gen'rous thought create,
  Or comfort one desponding soul,
Oh, then, let all the vain and great
  In pleasure's gilded chariots roll.

To lash the fool, to hallow sense,
  To hound the tyrant from the earth,
To lift the mask of mean pretence,
  And lead to honour modest worth;
O'er frailty's faults to cast a shade,
  To shield from scorn the wretch's grave,
To plant a flower that will not fade
  In mem'ry of the good and brave.

To banish care, to lighten toil,
  To smooth the rougher ways of life,
Of gen'rous hearts to till the soil,
  To urge the strong in noble strife;
To fill for woe the cup of bliss,
  To brighten dark despair's abode,
This is the poet's labour—this!
  The noblest ever done for God.

Be monuments of brass and stone,
  To knaves and fools, by *others* raised;
They are immortal—they alone,
  Who in enduring verse are praised.
Let others build for flesh and blood
  The palace or the cloister'd cell;
The poet builds—but not with mud—
  A home in which the *soul* may dwell.

Oh! Nature! bounteous, profuse,
  And seldom deaf to strong desire
(If mortal man may dare to choose,
  And not incur thy righteous ire),
Give gold, give fame, give all that's gilt,
  To those who for such treasures long—
Nay! give men *wisdom*, if thou wilt,
  But give to me the "gift of song."

Vote for the Liberal.

I'LL vote for the "liberal"—straight as a gun!
By ballot or openly, frightened for none;
And if sent to St Stephen's some niggard should be,
I'll take care that the blockhead won't represent me!

I'll vote for the man who by practice and deed,
Has proved himself free from chican'ry and greed;
Who is never found acting like scapegrace or boor—
Never flatt'ring the rich, or insulting the poor.

I'll vote for the lib'ral, but not for the sham,
Who acts like the cat though he bleats like the lamb;
On the hustings profuse, and exceedingly tame,
But still griping and grasping and grinding at HAME!

I'll vote for the lib'ral, but not for the "dirt,"
Who can prig down the laundress who washes his SHIRT!
Who devours all the chicken, and invariably groans
Should his servants presume to make off with the bones.

I'll vote for the lib'ral, but not for the Turk,
Who watches his labourers, daily, at work;
Who begrudges the poor man an ounce of good cheer,
And provides for his household the smallest of beer.

Commend me to the man who is gentleman born!
And shrinks from a meanness with infinite scorn;
I'll vote at the poll, were it far as the Nile,
For such lib'rals as GLENMOOR, or CLAUDE BALLOCHMYLE.

——:o:——

Verses for the Present Age.

"GET—get—get!" whilst the flow'rs and sunshine last;
Let the precious hoard be heaped and stored
Ere the bloom of life is passed.

"Bring—bring—bring!" and our Bab'lons stretch their hands;
And our hamlets small cry, one and all,
For the spoils of foreign lands.

"Quick—quick—quick!" and with nature art contends;
And a fleet of ships the wind outstrips,
And unites earth's utmost ends.

"Fast—fast—fast!" and the steeds of fire we yoke;
And the cars dash on through midnights lone,
Whose moons are eclipsed in smoke.

"Work—work—work!" and ten thousand anvils ring;
And the wheel rounds fast, and roars the blast
That grapples with night's grim king.

"Dig—dig—dig!" and the earth is undermined;
And her precious stores of hidden ores
Men deep in the darkness find.

"Keep—keep—keep!" and our chests and bolts are sure;
Yet never a land so great and grand
Had such ghastly crowds of poor.

"Get—get—get!" do not say that Heav'n is high;
Or that darkest deep can secret keep—
More light! or our souls must die.

"Know—know—know!" from our search let nought be hid;
In the heights blue-zoned—behind—beyond,
Or in gulfs unfathoméd.

"Speed—speed—speed!" and the globe is girdled round;
And the poles remov'd, and oceans groov'd,
And paths for the lightning found.

"Ask—ask—ask!" and the stars their circuits tell;
And the lead goes down—though Heav'n should frown—
To sound the dark depths of hell.

"Think—think—think!" and the flick'ring lamp is burned,
Till the beams of day have quenched its ray,
And the dreamer's brain is turned.

"Write—write—write!" and each finger guides a pen;
And the wingéd books, like flights of rooks,
Are in all the haunts of men.

"Read—read—read!" and the press grows tired and worn;
And, like snow or sleet, the printed sheet
Is blown by the winds of morn.

"Teach—teach—teach!"—and are people growing wise?
No! ignorance rules, and men are fools!
And their heaviest crops are—lies!

"Self—self—self!" it is *self* we ought to fear;
Until self is slain, we lose by gain,
Grow simpler the more we hear.

"Love—love—love!" from the heart let rev'rence fade,
Nor knowledge nor wealth can bring us health—
They are dews on a root decayed.

"God—God—God!" get *His* smile at any cost;
It can gild a cross—it sweetens loss,
And, losing it, *all* is lost!

Song.

Oh ! had my heart seraphic fire,
  My voice angelic tone ;
Were mine the softest sounding lyre
  That's struck before the throne ;
    My burning muse
    One theme would choose,
Nor seek to change the strain ;
    I'd sing the fair,
    Beyond compare,
And own my skill was vain.

A weary journey life had been
  Had not my darling's smile,
Like sunrise, brightened every scene,
  And shortened every mile.
    Her 'witching eye
    Has been the sky
That brought my day its noon ;
    Her rosy mouth
    The balmy south
That breathed my summer's June !

If ever earth was Heav'n above,
  Or mortal bosom blest,

It was when I first met my love,
When first her cheek I kissed!
The rapturous thrill,
Increasing still,
Throughout my being runs,
As roseate rays,
Through ripening days,
Increase to setting suns.

Less lightly leaps from lowly nest
The lark that meets the morn,
Than I, when, more supremely blest,
To beauty's bower I'm borne!
No angel swift
That leaves the lift
Repentant fiends to cheer,
Can message bring
On lighter wing
Than brings me to my dear!

Nor earth nor Heaven has any space
Her presence does not fill;
Remotest stars reflect her face,
She sings in every rill!
The lily fair,
With modest air,
Her graceful form assumes;

Her sweetness glows
In every rose,
In every blossom blooms!

Oh! never may that hour return
In which our hearts were twain!
That sun's meridian never burn
Which bids us part again!
If wild the thought
I pray that aught
Amiss may be forgiven;
But I could rest
On Martha's breast,
Nor dream of other Heaven!

——:o:——

A Picture.

(FROM NATURE.)

A LITTLE loch, o'er-frozen,
And white with sprinkled snow,
Where wint'ring lambs rest, dozing,
Or wandering to and fro
About the nooks and ledges,
With scarlet hips a-glow.

Tall reeds, and shiv'ring sedges,
  Which speak in whispers low;
The half-arrested flow
Of this sea's headlong river,
Which sings its song for ever,
  As seasons come and go—
When leafless aspens quiver—
  When summer's roses blow.

The startled ousel skimming
  The channel in affright;
The wedge-like covey, screaming
  On high in rapid flight;
A pensive redbreast dreaming
  Of summer's faded light,
And plaintive music streaming
  From throat of crimson bright.

Let others prize the treasures
  Which wealth alone can buy—
A connoisseur's chief pleasures—
  Dear to the critic's eye;
Beyond all praise or stricture—
  Though neither rich nor grand—
I love this time-worn picture,
  Drawn by the Master's hand.

Wee Brosie.

We have a little brother here,
  Whose cheeks are red and rosy;
And sometimes, when we're making cheer,
  We nickname him "Wee Brosie."

He's just as fat's a little pig,
  And has a queer wee nosie;
So, when we run about at "tig,"
  We laugh, and call him "Brosie."

He's not as soft as you would think,
  Nor, like a turnip, fozie—
No one can round a corner gink
  As fast as our "Wee Brosie."

There's more than what the spoon put there,
  Beneath his little bos'ie;
Let greed and impudence beware!
  When they come near our "Brosie."

You steal his plumbs, or break his stick,
  Or trample on his toesie,
And you'll be challenged very quick
  By our indignant "Brosie."

He dods about the livelong day,
  As blooming as a posey;
And, overhead in prank or play,
  You're sure to find "Wee Brosie."

At night he comes, with closing e'en,
  And seeks his bed so cosy—
O! would that every king and queen
  Were happy as "Wee Brosie."

——:o:——

Cock-a-leerie Went to School.

COCK-A-LEERIE went to school—
Acted like a little fool—
Nought could learn, but flapped and flew,
Crowing—Cock-a-doodle-doo!

"Little Bantam," master said,
"You must not be so ill-bred;
All the school will laugh at you
Singing—Cock-a-doodle-doo!

"Tell me from what plaee you came,
Where's your home? and what's your name?"
Leerie said—"I'll tell you true—
It is—Cock-a-doodle-doo!"

School-house chang'd into a barn!
All the scholars ceased to learn,
Pleas'd to hear the scholar new
Crying—Cock-a-doodle-doo!

Master said—"If this you shout
I will have to turn you out;"
But his pupil bolder grew,
Shrieking—Cock-a-doodle-doo!

All the school in wild uproar,
He was usher'd to the door,
Where, turning round, he bow'd adieu,
With a—Cock-a-doodle-doo!

Cock-a-leerie cannot read,
Cannot write, or say the creed—
Ignorant, like not a few
Fond of—Cock-a-doodle-doo!

Boys and girls! at proper hours
Try to learn with all your pow'rs;
Play not till your task be through,
Then cry—Cock-a-doodle-doo!

Cock-Wren.

ONE little cockie you all must have seen,
Hopping through hedges, or ivy so green;
Dressed in dark brown, with a sharp-pointed bill,
Always in motion, and chirruping still;
Rick-tic-tic, rick-tic-tick,
Under the stone, over the stick,
Thus goes Cock-Wren, with his movements so quick!

Though he is small he is clever and skill'd,
See what a wonderful nest he can build!
Oval and domed, with a carpeted floor,
And a hole at the side for both window and door!
Rick-tic-tick, rick-tic-tick,
Under the stone, over the stick,
Thus goes Cock-Wren, with his movements so quick!

Though he is little, he thrives by his speed,
See what a fam'ly his labours can feed!
Never found begging, he chirrups away,
Always quite happy, always quite gay!
Rick-tic-tick, rick-tic-tick,
Under the stone, over the stick,
There goes Cock-Wren, with his movements so quick!

No bird so kind as Cock-Wren to his wife,
Fond of his children as fond of his life;
Frugal and constant, he seems to get through,
When birds much bigger don't know what to do.
Rick-tic-tick, rick-tic-tick,
Under the stone, over the stick,
There goes Cock-Wren, with his movements so quick!

Now, my young friends! let Cock-Wren be your guide;
Heed not the strong, or the great by your side;
Do what you can; to your duty give heed,
And whatever you try, you are sure to succeed.
Rick-tic-tick, rick-tic-tick,
Under the stone, over the stick,
Follow Cock-Wren in his movements so quick!

——:o:——

My Love is in Thy Care.

THOU goddess fair, of gracious air,
Who o'er the south dost reign,
Who clouds dost bind, who holdst the wind
Submissive on thy chain!
As mother mild an only child,
As sire a single heir,
Protect and guard thy precious ward—
My love is in thy care!

To northern hills let frost and chills
  On dripping wings retire;
Let tempests rave in rock-roofed cave
  The remnants of their ire:
Send rosy hours to verdant bowers
  Where bosoms rapture share,
And golden beams to silver streams—
  My love is in thy care!

The fleecy flocks which clothe thy rocks
  And through thy valleys wander,
Lead not a lamb or mourning dam
  So delicate and tender:
In every field provide a bield,
  And temper all the air
With holy calm and heavenly balm—
  My love is in thy care!

No feathered breast, that o'er its nest
  Finds blissful vent in song,
Like mine were wrung, though towards its young
  The spoiler crept along:
'Mongst woodbine leaves, beneath the eaves,
  The tender nurslings spare,
And keep from ill one dearer still—
  My love is in thy care!

Thou goddess fair, of gracious air,
  Who o'er the south dost reign!
With straining eye I watch the sky
  That vaults thy broad domain:
Oh! keep it bright by day and night,
  Nor doom me to despair;
A cloud might be a shroud for me—
  My love is in thy care!

——:o:——

I Looked upon a Maiden's Brow.

I LOOKED upon a maiden's brow—
  What field in spring so fair?
Far-stretching, fresh from Nature's plough,
  Smiled each sweet furrow there!
The light of love from lustrous eyes
  Flamed fervidly and strong,
And sowing 'neath Hope's cloudless skies,
  Time lightly stalked along.

I looked upon that brow again—
  No wintry waste so bare!
The straggling lines were crushed by pain,
  And rough with roots of care:
There shook the sere and yellow leaf
  In gusts of frosty breath,

And, slowly, with his latest sheaf,
  Retired the reaper—Death!

Long buried deep in darkest gloom
  Has life's sweet landscape lain,
And drearer still is beauty's tomb
  Than coldest Arctic plain:
To ravaged ranges springs return,
  Lone deserts summers cheer;
But darkness rests around the urn—
  'Tis always winter here!

Yet, winter long, and prospect bleak
  Shall love alike defy,
And in the grave still fondly seek
  The past with longing eye:
Desire at dooms-day shall be nursed
  More hopefully than now,
To see, as I beheld it first,
  That maiden's love-lit brow.

——:o:——

Wee Farthing John.

WEE Farthing John! if souls were cash
  The Devil could purloin,
Amongst his counterfeits and trash
  Yours were the smallest coin.

For fortune you have pestered fate
  With wonderful success,
But as your gains were growing great
  Your heart was growing less.

You've planned and plodded, like the wasp
  Within its narrow sphere,
Till death has got you in his grasp
  Amongst your goods and gear.

You now are like the spider old
  That shrivels in the sun,
The centre of the web of gold
  It from its bowels spun.

The poet you would grudge to pay,
  Who writes your epitaph,
But gratis you shall have the "lay,"
  If I may have the laugh.

EPITAPH.

The foremost whelp of Mammon's breed,
  The pride of Satan's college!
Here lies a mong'rel, starved by greed,
  And slain by saving-knowledge.

Some folks—alas! that there are such—
  Want bread, and cannot get it;

This creature's curse was having much,
With no desire to eat it.

Health, pleasure, love, nay, life itself,
Were placed within his hold,
But, set upon acquiring pelf,
He pawned them all for gold!

In life he was exceeding rich,
But poor when death drew near;
The dying beggar, from the ditch,
Comes not so wretched here!

——:o:——

A Fox-Hunter's Letter.

DEAR BOB,

HURRAH! a splendid run,
The "Beauties" rarely show such fun,
And I can neither feed nor snooze
Till you have got the blessed news.

The meet was at Don't-bother-Toll—
A god-send to the ancient soul
Who keeps the gate; who's fond of joking,
And said, whilst busy at his stocking—
"Whatever huntsmen may desire,
There's nothing pleases me like *wire*."

When by the covert side we met,
Ye gods! it was so thund'ring wet
That I have found, since coming in,
The "scarlet" dye has reached my skin,
Which it had never stained before,
Though dy'ing oft my bosom's core.

Old Quirks! who rather loves a show'r,
Walked out the "yelpers" for an hour,
Each "Whip" close following his track,
Like patience on a horse's back;
And we—a clump of jolly fellows—
Behind like dripping red umbrellas!

No "find"—so then the word was "trot"
To Fool-man's-Wood—you know the spot—
And as we passed the "Howlet's Nest"
The "B. and S." was in request—
Served out—*not* in a "silver tassie"—
By yon sweet owl, the landlord's lassie.

Our "spirits" gone! our courage cheered!
For Fool-man's-Wood our nags we steered,
Where scarcely were the "Darlings" laid
Till every tongue sweet music made;
And, bolt! a fox was "out for play,"
Midst yells! and cries of "Gone away."

But, thanks to bad luck and a "hasher,"
Stuck on a hack—some haberdasher!
The "varmint" headed, skulking back,
Ran right amongst the howling pack,
And kicked up a confounded flurry,
Which ended in inglorious "worry."

Another turn the "Hearties" take—
Then—"Gone away"—and *no* mistake!
The "tod" was half across the vale—
His friends, three yards behind his tail,
And fifty "Nimrods," with a "holla,"
In time to see, but *not* to follow.

The knowing "vixen" led away
Across a field of stiffish clay,
Then up a hill—whilst "roarers" cursed her—
Which proved to all but three—a "burster."

There leaving them to cool their foam,
And ask the shortest road for home,
We three held on like house on fire,
Whilst past us flew toll-bar and byre,
Till flying at a ditch and hedge,
My brute's hind feet broke down its edge,
And he—the glory of my stud—
And I were hugging in the mud.

The other "good-un" came to grief
Ere I woke up, and—to be brief—
Old Quirks—his roan nigh short of breath—
Did "Lord-in-Waiting" at the "Death,"
And making one despairing "rush,"
Came back in triumph with the "brush!"
Length! measured by a local bard—
Fifteen good miles and half-a-yard!
Time—mathematically reckoned—
One hour and quarter of a second!

A trifling "shy" and "spill" or two,
But no one "killed," so far's I knew,
Or put beyond the hope, so sweet,
Of trying to retain a "seat."
Miss Go-it, at a fence play-actor'd,
And had a fore-leg badly fractured;
And Lord Short-sight drove home to bed
A perfect fortune to his "med;"
And Jones, as usual, played the "duffer"
Without mishap—thanks to his "buffer"—
He surely keeps his brains (or blubber?)
Beneath a skull of india-rubber.

What glorious sport! Oh, life! how "slow!"
Without the stirring "Tally-ho;"

So, here's a toast, worth any sermon—
"Long wind to 'nags!' long life to vermin!
A speedy find! a steady scent!
No need to ask the way they went!
A rattling pace! runs not too brief!
Much jollity, and little grief!
And at the 'finish,' deep in slush,
The straightest rider get the brush!"

——:o:——

To an Old Thorn Hedge.

(AT CHRISTMAS-TIME.)

OLD hedge! that on this Winter morn
Dost shiver, ragged and forlorn!
Thy straggling branches bending low
Beneath the gath'ring load of snow!
Thy gaps so wide! thy stems so bare!
Thy thorns so sharp, and quick to tear!
Amongst the beggars crowding here
In hopes to share our Christmas cheer,
No abject creature I can see
So sad and wretched-like as thee.

Who could imagine life and breath
Are quick'ning 'neath this seeming death?

Who could believe that beauty lies
Concealed in such a coarse disguise?
That from these roots, so cold and dumb,
Shall music and sweet odours come?

Lo! at the gen'rous touch of Spring—
While yet her heralds' trumpets ring—
The tender bud to life shall start,
Responsive as a maiden's heart,
Which feels—oh, bliss! all bliss above!—
The touch of soul-enrapturing love.
Quick from the thorn so sharp and keen
Shall spread the leaf of freshest green;
Till thou, in richest verdure dressed,
Hast woo'd the minstrel to thy breast;
And 'neath thy blossoms made a bed
Of song and sweetness—newly wed.

When Summer comes with rip'ning glow,
How sweetly shall thy roses blow!
Beneath thy fost'ring care shall spring
Flow'rs fit to garland any king—
The fox-glove and the meadow-queen;
And hyacinth of rarest sheen;
And others, graceful, peeping through—
In ev'ry form, of ev'ry hue—

(To childhood known, to manhood strange)
Which nature only can arrange;
Whose beauty, touching every heart,
Can only be impaired by art.

Beneath the clear and cloudless moon
Of warm and life-engend'ring June,
Like cherub wander'd from the sky,
Shall flit the restless butterfly;
And bees on willing wings shall come
To sing of bliss with drowsy hum,
And tempt the sluggard to the sky
By paths of honest industry.

Here, happy as the day is long,
Shall bound, with supple joints and strong,
The schoolboy, in engrossing quest;
His empire in a linnet's nest,
His treasure in the fruit he seeks—
Fair rival of his blooming cheeks!
Which hides like worth, or love afraid—
The sweetest thing that God has made!

When Autumn brings the moaning gust,
And lays thy glories in the dust;

Like matron, with a frugal heart,
Thou still will act a gen'rous part,
And on thy boughs—rich clustered—
Shall hang the haws, so ripe and red,
To feed throughout the winter drear
The hopeful fledglings thou dost rear.

Old hedge! that on this Winter morn
Dost shiver, ragged and forlorn!
May nature long protect thy life
From pickaxe prone, and scutching-knife;
And my I treasure in my heart
The lessons thou dost now impart.

May I not judge with thoughts severe
The rudest form that meets me here;
Nor with a thoughtless scorn despise
The meanest thing beneath the skies;
Nor, on rebellious aim intent,
Refuse what blessing God has sent,
Because it comes like Winter thorn,
Its leaves and blossoms yet unborn.

A heart of love and tender grace
May beat beneath the sternest face.

Beneath the sterile soil may lie
A mine of gold enrapturingly,
Which only asks a patient hand
To place its wealth at our command.

The basest wretch that lives below
May be a saint in embryo,
Prepared, when done with grov'lling here,
To soar in Heav'n's celestial sphere;
As creeping worms, we know, enfold
Beneath their grossness, wings of gold!

The prodigal whose footsteps stray
So far from virtue's heav'n-ward way
That he, of ev'ry grace bereft,
Is even by affection left;
May only, like the hedge I sing,
Await the quick'ning breath of Spring,
To cleanse his soul from ev'ry stain,
And make his graces bloom again.

However darkly clouds may low'r,
There may be blessing sent to show'r
Upon the anxious sower's path,
Which they have darken'd in their wrath.

And howsoever strange may be
The Providence of God to me—
Though for the moment hard to bear,
And leading me to doubt His care—
It may be like the frost and snow
Descending on an old hedge-row,
Which fits the thorn, at future day,
To clad itself with perfum'd spray;
And straggling briers, when Winter closes,
To crown themselves with wreaths of roses.

THE END.

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